

**Sōseki and Shiki: their friendship in haiku and *kanshi*.**

**By**

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**Rosemary Se-Soon Kang**



**Date:**

1/11/05

## Acknowledgements

The research topic interested me as an issue of identity in the middle of Westernisation of Eastern culture. As a Korean-Australian, I feel my own self-identity requires ongoing adjustment and constant reflection. The essence of Sōseki's 'My Individualism' is somewhat similar to the phrase I often repeat to my self. "I am what I am". Hence I believe Sōseki's experience is partly a mirror of my own situation.

The love and understanding of *kanshi* and haiku was felt naturally, whereas how to express it in English was challenging. This research has deepened my understanding of my own culture and required me to convey my knowledge in a different language. However, I realised competency of language is not the only requisite in being able to convey aspects of a foreign culture. It involves more complicated issues of humanity and cultural aspects. Breaking down this broad term 'cultural' itself seems complex. Nevertheless, the belief that communication should be continued in order to understand each other in depth is ever strong. I thank my supervisor, Dr. Maria Flutsch for giving me the chance to pursue this research with resourceful guidance.

I dedicate this thesis to my late father Dr. Bong-Hun Yoon and my eldest brother Dr. Se-Young Yoon. I would like to send my special thanks to Dr. Maria Flutsch and Prof. Hidekazu Hirose for giving me the foundation to begin my thesis, and to Dr. Wynne Russell and Mrs. Agnes Wilson for helping me to complete it. I appreciate the constant support of my husband and my family.

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## Abstract

This thesis interrogates the friendship between Natsume Sōseki and Masaoka Shiki through a study of their *kanshi* and haiku exchanges, examining the concepts of “influence” and intertextuality.

Both Sōseki and Shiki were educated in the Chinese classics and practiced writing *kanshi* during their student days. When Sōseki and Shiki became good friends, they exchanged *kanshi* and haiku in their correspondence. Shiki was impressed by Sōseki's creativity of expression, his sensitivity to colours and sounds and his ability to express innermost thoughts in his *kanshi*. Even though Sōseki's motivation for writing *kanshi* writing did not arise from his relationship with Shiki, their literary friendship, ie Shiki's *kanshi* writing and his *kanshi* exchange with Sōseki gave Sōseki added encouragement and opportunities for, and pleasure in, composing *kanshi*. This thesis will concentrate on Sōseki's early *kanshi*, written while Shiki was alive, before Sōseki departed to England.

Under the influence of Shiki's new haiku movement and *shasei* theory, Sōseki explored haiku writing in his own unique way. Shiki introduced the concept of the sketch in western painting to haiku writing and claimed that modern haiku writers should be both imaginative and realistic. In general, Shiki emphasized objective depiction. Shiki achieved ‘created realism’ by careful observation and description while Sōseki achieved this by reflecting the hidden side, the inner life of reflection and emotion.

Sōseki and Shiki use the genres *kanshi* and haiku as mediums for exchanging their thoughts and feelings since they were traditional Japanese form of verse. Their treatments of these genres reflect and are symbolic of the developments in Japanese literature as a whole towards “modernization”. The genderised depiction in their poetry, of their relationship, will be explored as an example of the trend of friendships between the male elite of the Meiji era.

## Chapter One: Introduction

This thesis examines the contact point between Masaoka Shiki<sup>1</sup> and Natsume Sōseki, specifically their exchange of *kanshi* and haiku, to identify Shiki's "influence" on Sōseki. Their friendship is an important factor in the development of Sōseki's creative talent. Sōseki's haiku writing started when Shiki stayed at Sōseki's house in Matsuyama, and his early *kanshi* were also stimulated by the exchange of critiques with Shiki in their correspondence.

Shiki's influence on Sōseki is explored at two different levels. One level is their actual, living friendship and the consequences of this friendship on Sōseki's life. The beginning of their association was spontaneous, arising from their shared interest in *rakugo*. This relationship then developed into a typical literary friendship. The other level is their friendship through the exchange of literary works and the effects of this exchange on the texts of their *kanshi* and haiku. Shiki and Sōseki's early *kanshi* and haiku will be analyzed and compared.

Friendship between writers has been recorded throughout history, particularly the history of literature, because of its influence on literary works. This friendship has been expressed in poetry exchanges over many years and in many countries. Takahashi Hideo elaborates:

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<sup>1</sup> Names in this thesis are given in accordance with the conventions of Japanese, Korean, Chinese and Western names.



It is often the case that friendship floats up vividly and is branded in one's mind when there's a taste of separation. ... 'friend', 'separation' and 'literature' have nothing much to do each other when trying to explain what happened, why it happened in such a way. However, it has somehow the strange implication of the eternal triangle.... Especially in T'ang dynasty China, there were many poems written about the friendship at and during the time of separation.<sup>2</sup>

Takahashi describes the friendship between two major Chinese poets Li-Bai and Tu-Fu, showing how intimacy, closeness and sameness is important to friendship, but how, at times, distance and difference contribute to strengthening the friendship. In the same way as Shiki and Sōseki, Li-Bai and Tu-Fu's friendship was based on an appreciation of their difference and their poems written when they were apart exhibited the sincerity of friendship.

### **1-1 Meiji Period Literary Friendships**

In Meiji Japan, there emerged master teachers of great charisma who had a profound influence on their students and their friendship was highly valued. The boundaries of the definition of the relationship between students and teachers and of friendship were blurred. Sometimes, there was a substantial age difference between friends. This is particularly true of the first generation of the Meiji era, who had to go through rapid social change as forerunners, relying on friends rather than teachers.

Takahashi Hideo<sup>3</sup> describes Mori Ogai's friendships as a model case of the literary friendships of the first generation of Meiji. Ogai's friend Fukuma Hiroshi, who appears

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<sup>2</sup> Takahashi Hideo, *Yūjō no Bungakushi*, p. 3

<sup>3</sup> Takahashi Hideo, *Yūjō no Bungakushi*, p. 47

in Ogai's *Futarino Tomotachi*, was thirteen years junior, while Kako Tsurudo, who appears in his novel *Vita Sexualis*, was seven years senior. Fukuma was not only different in age but in personality as well.

Another feature of Meiji literary friends is that they formed groups and participated in literary activities together under the same banner. Ogai, together with Kako Tsurudo, established the *Tokiwakai*, which contributed to maintaining their friendship. Their friendship was the driving force behind the activities of the club. Like Sōseki and Shiki, Kako Tsurudo was in the same grade as Ogai in Tokyo Medical School even though they had a seven year age gap. However, unlike Sōseki and Shiki, their friendship was viewed as formal and at a professional level, partly, Takahashi argues, because they used the literary style rather than colloquial style and exchanged *waka* in their correspondence. The closeness of their friendship can be deduced from the fact that Ogai had Kako draw up his final will.

The second generation of Meiji such as Akutakawa Ryūnosuke, considered that a good teacher was very important, given that teachers with high formal education (at Tokyo Imperial University etc) were now emerging, unlike the situation in the previous generation Akutakawa, who as one of Sōseki's young disciples, attended Ogai's group before he began attending Sōseki's *Mokuyōkai* (Thursday club)' at Sōseki's place. Takahashi notes that Akutakawa's attitude is typical of the youth in Meiji. They checked out the uniting spirit, the philosophy, the master and the members of the club

before they made the decision to join. “Most of the second generation had a deepest respect towards their great masters and friendships grew between disciples in the circle.”<sup>4</sup>

### 1-2 Sōseki and Shiki’s Friendship

Sōseki and Shiki’s friendship also developed, under the general trend of Meiji elite friendships, marked by an encouragement of each other’s work. The influence of their friendship continued throughout Sōseki’s literary career even after Shiki’s death, and left its mark on the world of literary friendships.

The conjugal metaphor of ‘husband’ and ‘wife’<sup>5</sup> with which Sōseki and Shiki characterised their friendship, points to the all-male world of elite modernizers and intellectuals, a circle to which women were generally not admitted. Close friendships between males of the Meiji elite and intelligentsia were a feature of late Meiji society. Women were redefined as belonging strictly to the private, nurturing, “reproductive” roles while men functioned in the public arena: separation and genderisation of public and private spheres, based upon a complex mix of samurai social practice and 19<sup>th</sup> century Prussian social norms, created what has been called a homosocial society, limited, of course, mostly to the elite level, where men were closer to each other emotionally as well as in shared interests, than to their wives.

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<sup>4</sup> Takahashi Hideo, *Yūjo no Bungakushi*, p.110

<sup>5</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 29

Sōseki's knowledge of English, English literature and western ideas stimulated and activated Shiki's original curiosity and interest in the west. Masako Hirai argues,

I cannot help thinking that it was mainly Sōseki's influence that provoked Shiki's interest in Herbert Spencer's Philosophy of style, which was their textbook at school in 1888. It caused him to apply Spencer's evolutionary theory to styles of writing in his later analyses of haiku and its critical defence.<sup>6</sup>

Shiki was also influenced by Sōseki in many ways, but in this thesis, I will limit myself to focusing on Shiki's "influence" on Sōseki.

The concept of "influence" is analysed extensively by Ulla Musarra-Schroeder<sup>7</sup> in *Influence vs Intertextuality* and is categorized into three types.

First, an artist or writer may be influenced by the literary friend's attitude towards literature. Shiki valued literature as a high calling in life and pursued it with his whole heart. His attitude influenced Sōseki's decision to become a novelist instead of an English scholar. As Janine Beichman puts "Shiki used 'my literature' as synonym for 'my life'."<sup>8</sup> Shiki's psychological influence on Sōseki was a substantial one. Sōseki's pessimistic view of the world and insecurity in human relationship needed a positive assurance, which Shiki delivered through their friendship. Shiki's admiration of Sōseki's talent was an encouragement for Sōseki's writing. Knowing that he would not live long, Shiki was keen to work together in a group and to be a 'builder of a literary school'.<sup>9</sup> His influence over Takahama Kyoshi, Kawahigashi Hekigotō and other

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<sup>6</sup> Hirai Masako, 'The Letters between Shiki and Sōseki', p.18

<sup>7</sup> Ulla Musarra-Schroeder, *Influence vs Intertextuality* p.170

<sup>8</sup> Janine Beichman, *Masaoka Shiki His Life and Works* p.24

<sup>9</sup> Janine Beichman, *Masaoka Shiki His Life and Works* P.22

*Nihonha* haiku writers, with whom Sōseki exchanged literary correspondence even after Shiki died, prolonged Shiki's influence on Sōseki.

Second, according to Musarra-Schroder, influence can consist of formal, stylistic, structural or compositional principles. Shiki's new haiku movement's main purpose was to instil new life into the conventional form of haiku. According to Janine Beichman, If the haiku made no attempt to reflect the world as it was, it was doomed to sterility. ... The second reason Shiki gave for the inevitable disappearance of the haiku was its intrinsic limitation as a form.<sup>10</sup>

At first, Shiki was attracted to Herbert Spencer's idea of 'the economy of mental energy'. Language and writing should concentrate on controlling the reader's attention and on economizing the reader's energy spent on reading. Shiki thought Spencer's idea that the best is the simplest holds good in rhetoric and justifies the short form of haiku as the best of literature. On the other hand, Shiki also struggled with Spencer's idea of progress from homogeneous to heterogeneous, towards complexity in image and meaning in haiku.

Shiki tried to bring a vivid, live and realistic expression to haiku, abandoning old fashioned, pre-determined flowery seasonal phrase and the like. In the traditional haiku, only certain images and phrases are allowed as seasonal words, and the subjects left vague in order to draw attention to the nature.

Beichman argues that

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<sup>10</sup> Janine Beichman, *Masaoka Shiki, His Life and Works* p.34-35

One of Shiki's most important accomplishments in the haiku was to make his own individual situation and emotions an essential part of the poem. In his haiku, he is as important as the season.<sup>11</sup>

Shiki's emphasis on individual observation of nature also demonstrates the importance of the poet's own perception. The issue of conscious experience or the perception of nature stems from English Romanticism and Transcendentalism. The Romantic definition of poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful emotion"<sup>12</sup> emphasized the individual's intuition in their perception of nature. Nature, mythology and emotion were of great importance and were used to explore the feelings of the poet himself. For Romantic poets, the individual's perception of nature is considered the truth whether it matches reality or not.

Bloom quotes Geoffrey Hartman:

Wordsworth's thinking starts with objects not as they are but as they appear to a mind fruitfully perplexed by their differing modes of appearance, and which does not try to reduce these to a single standard.<sup>13</sup>

Owen Barfield valued Romanticism as idol smashing by a will to return to "participation" in the original imagistic representation rather than the substituted memory-image.<sup>14</sup> The fact that Shiki abandoned the pre-fixed pattern of seasonal phrase and expressed what he saw, emphasizing careful observation of reality, can be seen a form of Eastern idol-smashing.

Shiki advocated the sketch method, sketching from a real object, which he borrowed from the concept of sketch in western painting thus bringing another sensory dimension,

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<sup>11</sup> Janine Beichman, *Masaoka Shiki, His Life and Works* p.69

<sup>12</sup> William Wordsworth, 'Preface' *Lyrical Ballads* (1800)

<sup>13</sup> Harold Bloom, *Poetics of Influence*, p.151

<sup>14</sup> Harold Bloom, *Poetics of Influence*, p.148

the visual, into haiku writing in order to enhance the sense of reality. The distinctive ways in which different media interpret an idea or a scene have been a matter of debate since the beginning of civilization. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing differentiated between the poet as an interpreter of time and the artist as an interpreter of space. However, the roles of both poet and artist are as interpreters. Bryan Wolf agrees with Tom Mitchell that “there is no essential difference between poetry and painting.”<sup>15</sup> Wolf cites Emerson’s assertion that painting and literature are united in a common rhetorical structure, pointing out his concern not to distinguish painting from literature but to reunify them under the common banner of representation.

It was often the case in traditional Eastern nature painting that a poem was used for the title of the painting. The boundary between art and literature was blurred and expressed as the poet-artist’s representation. Therefore, Shiki’s application of fine-art techniques to literature was adventurous only in the sense that he applied Western rather than Eastern notions of art to haiku.

Shiki’s *shasei* (sketch method) haiku was based on a depiction of reality even though he allowed for imagination, which caused some controversy. Towards the end of his life Shiki’s confinement to his bed made him more dependent on imagination for subjects for his haiku.

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<sup>15</sup> Bryan Wolf, ‘Confessions of a Closet Ekphrastic: Literature, Painting, and Other Unnatural Relations’ *Yale Journal of Criticism* 3(1990). P.181-203

Unlike Shiki, Sōseki did not set out consciously to change or modernize haiku and *kanshi*. However, Shiki's emphasis on representing reality as it is encouraged Sōseki in his use of *kanshi* and haiku to express describe his actual personal emotions. Both Shiki and Sōseki internalised the same theory of realistic expression. Each then gave their own creatively unique expression to this theory.

The third category of influence listed by Ulla Musarra-Schroeder restricts itself to the writing process: the process of creation of a text.

Sōseki wrote to Shiki on December 31, 1889.

Excellence in writing always lies with the unadorned, simple, plain, direct description of one's philosophy....So in my view, if you wish to fly your banner in the literary world for thousands of years, you should do nothing but concentrate on nourishing your philosophy....Things such as the beauty of writing and the rule of phrasing can come only next, or still next, for they never affect the value of the idea itself.<sup>16</sup>

In another letter to Shiki at the beginning of January, 1890, Sōseki wrote:

Bunshō (literature or writing) is an idea which is expressed by means of words on paper, therefore, in my view, idea is the essence of bunshō, and what arranges words is an element of bunshō but not so important as the idea which is the essence....Best bunshō is the best idea which is expressed in the best way by means of words on paper. The bunshō should express the idea itself and make the reader feel the exact (no more or no less) meaning, which alone is rhetoric treats...Therefore, to cultivate this idea, culture is essential, and next required is experience. However, if one stays in the field of one's experience, the field for getting Idea remains narrow, and that is why I say culture is

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<sup>16</sup> Hirai, Masako, 'The Letters between Shiki and Sōseki', p.18



essential. Then, what is culture? It is knowing the ideas which have been said and known in the world.<sup>17</sup>

According to Masako Hirai,

The meaning of words like 'idea' and 'rhetoric' was a focus point of contention not only between Shiki and Sōseki but also between East and West. That is an important way in which their friendship and correspondence stimulated change and development in their original ideas and writings.<sup>18</sup>

The writing process has been the focus of psychoanalysis from Freud through Lacan, to the present day. Freud's psychoanalytic interpretation of the conscious and unconscious has been of considerable interest to literary critics, given that most genres of literature use symbolism, imagery and metaphor to describe life. Lacan's 'I am where I think not' emphasizes the unconscious as the self. Lacan argues that the unconscious is structured like a language and that meaning in language is a matter of contrasts between words in a network of differences. The word (signifier) and the referent (signified) are not the same but rather have a life of their own and constantly override each other and make adjustments to clarify reality. Both Sōseki and Shiki thought deeply about the relationship between the signifier and the signified. The vivid expression in Shiki's haiku and the depiction of individually experienced nature in Sōseki's *kanshi* are the products of their different searches for a transparency of the relationship between the signifier and the signified.

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<sup>17</sup> Hirai, Masako, 'The Letters between Shiki and Sōseki', p.19

<sup>18</sup> Hirai, Masako, 'The Letters between Shiki and Sōseki', p.20

A further issue about the relationship between the signifier and the signified in poetry is the issue of intertextuality. According to Harold Bloom,

A poetic text is not a gathering of signs on a page, but is a psychic battlefield upon which authentic forces struggle for the inspired guess over the completely forgotten condition...Any poem is an inter-poem, and any reading of a poem is an inter-reading. A poem is not writing but re-writing, and though a strong poem is a fresh start, such a start is a starting-again.<sup>19</sup>

Bloom defines the struggle for identity of poets under the pressure of great predecessors as the Oedipus complex and argues that poetic influence cannot be reduced to source study, to the history of ideas, or to the patterning of images.

### 1-3 Soseki's quest: "what is literature?"

Sōseki's search for answer to the question, "what is literature", which confronted him most dramatically in England as a Japanese with *kanbungaku* background, was later recorded in a series of essays entitled *Bungakuron*. In the introduction he wrote:

I shut myself up in my room in my boarding house and packed all the works of literature I owned away in my wicker trunk, as I believed that reading literature in order to understand the nature of literature was like washing blood with blood. I vowed to probe the psychological origins of literature: what led to its appearance, development, and decline. And I vowed to explore the social factors that brought literature into this world and caused it to flourish or wither.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Bloom, Harold, 'Poetry, Revisionism and Repression', Newton, K.M (ed.), *Twentieth-Century Literary Theory*, p. 149-150

<sup>20</sup> Karatani Kojin, *The Origins of Japanese Modern Literature*, p.12

According to Karatani Kojin, Sōseki justified this idiosyncratic way of embarking on the study of literature because the general public in Meiji Japan was not ready to understand the concept of literature. Karatani continued:

Of course, as Michel Foucault has observed, the concept of “literature” itself was a relative new-comer to European civilization in the nineteenth century. Sōseki, although his very life was encompassed by “literature”, could not escape from his doubts about it. They were doubts that seemed all the more iconoclastic in Japan of 1908, where “literature” had just firmly established itself. ... The first notion that Sōseki subjected to doubt was that of the universal character of English literature. Of course, by this I do not mean to imply that Sōseki’s aim was simply to relativize English literature by juxtaposing it to *kanbungaku*, that diverse corpus of texts written in Chinese ideographs in which he had immersed himself while growing up. His real concern was to point out that that universality was not a priori but historical.<sup>21</sup>

Sōseki’s doubt about the idea that English literature is the universal literature of his time is described in Karatani Kojin’s ‘Discovery of Landscape’:

Sōseki took exception to the view that history was continuous and inevitable, as well as to the hidden ethnocentrism of the “history” that emerged in nineteenth century Europe. Moreover, he rejected the idea that a literary work could be reduced to a whole called “the spirit of the age” or “the author”, and emphasized “only those characteristics manifested in the work itself.” Sōseki’s approach here may be seen as a kind of formalist analysis, but of course it preceded the appearance of the formalist movement and formalist theory.<sup>22</sup>

However, Sōseki’s inquiry into the identity of Japanese literature lead him to the question of why history “has to be this way not that way and why I am here not there”,

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<sup>21</sup> Karatani Kojin, *The Origins of Japanese Modern Literature*, p.12

<sup>22</sup> Karatani Kojin, *The Origins of Japanese Modern Literature*, p.15

the fundamental question of Pascal, that is missing from the formalists. Karatani points out:

‘Sōseki could not accept what Michel Foucault defines as “the principle of identity” in European thought. For Sōseki, structures were entities which were interchangeable and capable of redefinition.”<sup>23</sup>

In his essay ‘My Individualism’ Sōseki explained his views further:

Let alone, the issue of English literature, I could not even understand what is literature...I realized that the only way that I could save myself was that I had to establish the concept ‘literature’ by myself... As an example, even though Westerners says that it is a wonderful poem or it shows excellent skill in handling the vocabulary, it can only be my reference as a point of view from Westerners. I cannot accept the view if I do not agree with it. I should have my own opinion as a citizen since I am an independent Japanese not a slave of English.<sup>24</sup>

As early as 1891 in a letter to Shiki, Sōseki explicitly commented about this issue of Japanese literature and his struggle to cope with the challenge of an entirely new tradition of literature:

It was a shock to me, to see how our taste differed! Thinking it over, however, perhaps our originally shared tastes have changed according to our courses of learning, which makes me more determined to get universal learning so that I may avoid the trap of prejudice. To think further, if I were unfamiliar with the value of the literature of my own country, I should not only be ashamed before you who are fond of Japan. ...To command the study of all western literature is

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<sup>23</sup> Karatani Kojin, *The Origins of Japanese Modern Literature*, p.16

<sup>24</sup> Miyoshi Yukio, ed. *Sōseki Bunmeiron shū*, p.113

a dream beyond my ability, as I have recently discovered, so I should, from now on, follow your advice and study Japanese literature as much as I can.<sup>25</sup>

Haga Tōru commented on the development of Sōseki's attitudes:

Sōseki marched on as if attacking English literature, with a kind of commando spirit. However, in the end, Sōseki felt that English literature is somehow different from his own spiritual habitude. From that sense of difference, Sōseki found 'East' is innate in him.<sup>26</sup>

As is well known, Mori Ogai, too, eventually found Western literature too alien and turned back to his own traditions. Marvin Marcus noted that

Ogai introduced German romanticism and idealism, together with aesthetic philosophy and modern literary criticism. ...Later, the Ogai's biography takes a curiously Japanese turn. A growing aversion toward the headlong course of westernization led to a rejection of "imported" modes of expression in favor of native sources of inspiration....He wrote *kanshi* and *kanbun* (prose in classical Chinese) and dabbled in calligraphy and art, the typical refinements of the Edo gentry. He was a devotee of kabuki.<sup>27</sup>

Unlike Ogai, Sōseki experienced intensely the conflict between his Chinese literature background and English literature from the very beginning of his stay in England.<sup>28</sup> His development of a personal, unique stance is identifiable in his concept of *Jikohon'i* (self-centered standard or egoistic canon), For Haga, Sōseki's novel *Kusamakura* is the expression of Sōseki's 'East', but even the topos in this novel of *tōgenkyō*, the ancient fairyland of the east, is not used in the original sense as used by Tao Yuen Ming but as the broken *tōgenkyō* of modern times. Faith in an ancient golden age was almost fatally

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<sup>25</sup> Hirai, Masako, 'The Letters between Shiki and Sōseki', p.20

<sup>26</sup> Karatani Kōjin, Koike Seiji, Komori Yōichi, Haga Tōru, Kamei Shunsuke, *Sōseki o Yomu*, p.153

<sup>27</sup> Marcus Marvin, *Paragons of the Ordinary: The Biographical Literature of Mori Ogai*

<sup>28</sup> Karatani Kōjin, Koike Seiji, Komori Yōichi, Haga Tōru, Kamei Shūnosuke, *Sōseki o Yomu*, p.154

challenged by the theory of evolution and the spectacle of the colonial humiliation of China, the source and locus of the concept *tōgenkyō*.

#### **1-4 Japanese Identity: *kanshi* and haiku.**

While Shiki reformed haiku introducing complexity of meaning and vivid, realistic imagery in order to revitalize the genre, Sōseki used both *kanshi* and haiku to express his innermost personal emotions and to depict his inner life. Together, their individualistic expression achieved the modernization of *kanshi* and haiku. Sōseki continued the search for his own stance in a variety of genres, but the reason both of them continued to write in the traditional genres of *kanshi* and haiku was deeply bound up with the consciousness of their identity as citizens of Japan.

#### **1-5 Literature Review**

In my analysis of Sōseki's *kanshi* I referred extensively to commentaries by Yoshikawa Kōjirō, Sako Jun'ichirō, Iida Rigyō, Jin Myung-Soon and Son Soon-ok.

Yoshikawa Kōjirō was a scholar of Chinese literature, specializing in Chinese poetry, so his view is analytical, based on a broad knowledge of Chinese poetry and culture. He points out that Sōseki's use of Chinese is accurate though his vocabulary is not as abundant as that of professional *kanshi* writers of the time. For him Sōseki's *kanshi*, written as an amateur, have two major significances. One is that they are part of Sōseki's oeuvre and the other is that they are well written. The reason for the excellence of Sōseki's *kanshi* is that it is poetry written by a philosopher, with a remarkable depth of thought.

Sako Junichirō's *Sōseki Shishū Zenshaku* was published by the publishing arm of Nishogakusha Daigaku where Sōseki practiced *kanshi* and studied the Chinese Classics from 1881 till 1883, before he entered the Tokyo University preparatory school. Sako analyzes the literary meaning of the poem and provides relevant background information. He indicates that he studied these poems with three specialists in order to achieve as objective a viewpoint as possible.

Iida Rigyō's view is deeply imbued with Buddhism. He claims that Sōseki's poetic words come from a Zen spirit and Sōseki's later poems show how deeply Sōseki was influenced by Zen.

Jin Myung-Soon values Sōseki's *kanshi* writing as a record of author Sōseki, thoughts and emotional states. Jin studied many aspects of links between Sōseki's *kanshi* and his novels and also believed that Sōseki's *kanshi* contains his major literary thoughts.

Son Soon-ok analysed Sōseki's haiku and emphasized satire as one of the most important characteristics of his haiku.

In evaluating the relationship between Sōseki, Shiki and the Meiji literary world and in analyzing their theoretical stances, I referred to books by Wada Toshio, Etō Jun, Karatani Kōjin, Nishimura Yoshiko, Watanabe Shōichi and Takahashi Hideo.

Wada Toshio majored in *kanbungaku* and researched Sōseki's haiku and *kanshi* in depth. He firmly believed that Sōseki used *kanshi* and haiku for expressing his innermost self. According to Wada, these genres were the two pillars that supported the novelist Sōseki from the inside and enabled him to continue with the daily commitment of novel-writing.

Etō Jun was a younger critic who majored English literature. He took a psycho-analytical approach, focussing on Sōseki's childhood experiences and his development into the mature adult and writer. Etō Jun's *Sseki to Sono Jidai* emphasized the contextual in Sōseki's search for identity. For Etō, Sōseki's search was part of the national search for identity in Meiji Japan.

Karatani Kōjin takes a theoretical approach to Sōseki's works. He notes that Sōseki's *Bungakuron* was a "flower that bloomed out of season and therefore left no seed."<sup>29</sup> Brett de Bary wrote in her introduction:

Karatani in *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature* appears closer to the Foucault of *The Order of Things* in insisting that any conceptual system or discursive formation is ultimately determining of what is seen to constitute truth within it. Thus, while on the one hand he uses the concept of history and origins to defamiliarize the natural and commonsensical in Japanese modernity, Karatani on the other must insist on the radical unknowability of the other-than-modern. For Karatani, Sōseki, despite his youthful studies of Chinese classics, was already engulfed by modernity in a way that made it impossible for him to retrieve any kind of pristine and direct knowledge of the past.<sup>30</sup>

Takahashi Hideo wrote on Meiji literary friendships in detail. He views Sōseki and Shiki's friendship is unique, calling it a 'hermetic friendship'. He argued that their pure and intense friendship sparked the modernization of *kanshi* and haiku.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Karatani Kōjin, *The Origins of Japanese Modern Literature*, p.11

<sup>30</sup> Karatani Kōjin, *The Origins of Japanese Modern Literature*, p.6

<sup>31</sup> Takahashi Hideo, *Sōseki Kenkyū*



Janine Beichman's accomplished *Masaoka Shiki: His Life and Works* was a valuable reference. It was informative, providing detailed expositions of works in various genres: haiku, tanka, prose and diaries. The translations are superb. Janine Beichman summed up Shiki as follows:

Shiki sought a justification for Japan's traditional poetic forms (the haiku and the tanka) in Western ideas (Herbert Spencer's), but did not feel free to pursue literature as a vocation until he could make it conform to the rationalism and scholarly approach of the Confucian tradition. In other words, he felt a need to justify traditional poetry in modern terms, and modern vocation in traditional terms.<sup>32</sup>

The link between Sōseki's literary activities and the modernization of Japanese literature has been the subject of much scholarly attention. My contention is that his exchange of *kanshi* and haiku with Shiki was significant in his efforts to find ways of moderating between the east and the west and expressing the modern self. This thesis will deal firstly with his *kanshi* exchange (in chapter 2) and with his haiku exchange (in chapter 3).

## 1-6 Methodology

In this study I focus on the on the *kanshi* and haiku written by Sōseki and Shiki during their friendship. I analyse the connections between their poems and the nature of their friendship, particularly Shiki's "influence" on Sōseki in terms of various types of intertextuality: responses to each other's poems, references and allusions to each other's poems; allusions they have in common to ancient texts and to contemporary events and experiences; common and contrasting themes and styles; and common and contrasting

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<sup>32</sup>Beichman Janine, *Masaoka Shiki His Life and Works*

views of literature, particularly poetry, and its modernisation, as expressed in their poetry. Their poetry exchange evinces a rich and creatively successful friendship.

NOTE:

All English renderings of *kanshi* and haiku in this thesis, unless otherwise acknowledged (eg as translations by Burton Watson or Alan Turney), are my own. They are not meant to be translations, but are presented as paraphrases or summaries of the content of the poems, since, as a non-native speaker of English, I do not feel qualified to provide anything that could be termed translations. The beauty of the poems can be appreciated in the originals as provided, rather than in my English renditions.

## Chapter 2

### Natsume Sōseki's early *kanshi* and Masaoka Shiki

#### Introduction

This chapter will examine Shiki's contribution to Sōseki's creative life through a study of their *kanshi* exchange and their correspondence. The development of their friendship and the nature of their relationship will be explored. Although long acquainted, Sōseki and Shiki first became friends in January 1889, when both were aged twenty-three. In a postscript to Sōseki's travel journal, *Bokusetsuroku*, Shiki wrote in Chinese,

I have known Sōseki for a long time. But I have really started to associate with him since January of this year. Ever since I first arrived in Tokyo several years ago, I had been looking for good friends, but could not find any. Until I met

Sōseki, I was spending rather quiet and lonely days. Now that we know each other, the time before has become the waiting period. Now, I have a beneficial friend, which makes me very happy.<sup>60</sup>

Sōseki recorded his view of how the relationship began in his essay, 'Masaoka Shiki':

One of the reasons that I started to associate with Shiki was our common interest in *rakugo*. Since both of us knew *rakugo* well, the conversation flowed easily. From then we became quite close friends.<sup>61</sup>

Sōseki's motivation for composing *kanshi* did not entirely stem from his relationship with Shiki. Sōseki began writing *kanshi* at the age of seventeen, continuing until his death in 1916, a total of two hundred and eight. In his *Omoidasu Koto nado* (1910-11) Sōseki described the frame of mind he felt necessary for writing *kanshi* and haiku: one which was detached from the world and able to view the world from a distance.<sup>62</sup> Sōseki wrote *kanshi* for short periods, stopping for substantial intervals, then starting to write again, so they are usually classified by the period in which they were written.<sup>63</sup>

However, Shiki's *kanshi* writing and the *kanshi* exchange with Sōseki, occurring so early in Sōseki's creative life, gave Sōseki the encouragement and confidence in the genre as a form of expression the modern world, and in his abilities in the genre.

In order to compare Shiki's *kanshi* with Sōseki's work, this chapter will concentrate on Shiki's *kanshi* from his correspondence with Sōseki. Since Shiki wrote over 2000

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<sup>60</sup> Quoted in Etō Jun, *Sōseki to Sono Jidai*, Vol.1, p.147

<sup>61</sup> Quoted in Ōoka Makoto (ed), *Shiki to Sōseki, Shiki Senshū* Vol.9, p.383

<sup>62</sup> Flutsch, M (trans), *Recollections*, p.40

<sup>63</sup> Wada Toshio classified Sōseki's *kanshi* into four different periods. First Period: before the departure to England (1889-1900); Second period: Sōseki's recuperation from the critical illness of stomach ulcer at Shuzenji, July -October 1910; Third Period: theme of his Nanga painting period (1912 - 1916); Fourth Period: time of writing *Meian*, August 14-November 20 (1916).

*kanshi* throughout his life. I have sampled some representative *kanshi* from categories laid out by Wada Toshio and Shuku Shine: practice pieces for his own educational purposes; expressions of personal thoughts and portrayals of nature written before he seriously became involved in haiku reformation; and descriptions of the feelings and pain of the last stage of his life.<sup>64</sup>

Thus, this chapter proceeds in the following order, under the subtitles below:

2-1 The *kanshi* exchange between Sōseki and Shiki

2-2 Features of Sōseki's *kanshi*

2-3 Overview of Shiki's *kanshi*

2-4 Comparison of Sōseki's and Shiki's *kanshi*

2-5 Conclusion

## **2-1 The *kanshi* exchange between Sōseki and Shiki**

Sōseki and Shiki exchanged *kanshi* in their correspondence. This practice started when Shiki asked Sōseki to write a critique of his *Nanakusashū* which Shiki had written from the summer of 1888 until 1889. It contained seven volumes, one on each of the traditional genres: the 'Orchid Volume' of Chinese prose, the 'Bush Clover Volume' of Chinese poetry, the 'Ominaeshi Volume' of Japanese poetry, the 'Pampas Grass Volume' of haiku, the 'Morning Glory Volume' of Noh song, the 'Arrow-root Volume' of prose, and the 'Pink Volume' of a novel written in the old style. Sōseki wrote a *kanbun* critique and appended nine poems of seven-character *zekku*.<sup>65</sup> Sōseki later wrote to

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<sup>64</sup> Shuku Shine, 'Shiki no Kanshi', *Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho*, Dec. 2001. p.124

<sup>65</sup> 'Nanakusashū Hyō' *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.18, p.72-73

Shiki asking him to cut the poems from the text because they were not good enough<sup>66</sup> displaying, according to Wada Toshio, Sōseki's lifelong meticulousness and modesty.<sup>67</sup> Apart from the comment, 'a few vulgar phrases in the Orchid Volume', Sōseki praised *Nanakushashū* highly. Sōseki wrote critiques of all sections except those containing *waka* and haiku, because he was not deeply interested in these genres at that time and felt that he did not understand them well enough. At the end of the critique, Sōseki signed himself as "Sōseki" for the first time, indicating his intention to continue writing *kanbun* and *kanshi*.<sup>68</sup>

It is important to realize that Sōseki's *kanshi* exchange with Shiki was motivated not only by an interest in *kanshi* itself but also as an expression of friendly sympathy towards Shiki. Later, long after Shiki's death, in a piece for the journal, *Hototogisu*, Sōseki wrote that Shiki's Chinese writing was not so good.<sup>69</sup> Wada Toshio argued that Sōseki's original critique of Shiki's *Nanakusashū* was positive because it was the beginning of their association, and it may also have been a sign of Sōseki's consideration for Shiki, who was very ill at the time.<sup>70</sup>

Sōseki's critique was sent to Shiki in May 1889, soon after Sōseki had received the *Nanakusashū*. Most of the *kanshi* included in the critique were about Sōseki's regard for Shiki, and about his own feelings and state of mind at the time. Some examples follow:

'Seiho kietsu' was about Sōseki's student life in Tokyo.

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<sup>66</sup> Quoted in Wada Shingeki (ed.), *Sōseki Shiki Ōfuku Shokanshū*, p. 17

<sup>67</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.22

<sup>68</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.18, 485-494

<sup>69</sup> 'Masaōka Shiki', *Hototogisu*, September, 1908.

<sup>70</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.21

青袍幾閱帝京秋      酒点淚痕憶旧遊  
故國烟花空一夢      不耐他鄉寫閑愁<sup>71</sup>

The smell of drink on the autumn uniform,  
The tears and the regret of nostalgic memories.  
The beautiful spring mist of hometown was just a dream,  
Far away, now I am overwhelmed by random sadness.

‘Random sadness (閑愁)’ expresses the feeling of lonely, melancholic grieving without any specific reason or cause. Saitō Junji commented “this random involuntarily arising sadness was a cloud that hung over all of Sōseki’s youth as a source of insecurity and anxiety.”<sup>72</sup>

幾年零落亦風流      好賃江頭香月樓  
麥綠菜黃吟欲尽      又逢紅蓼白蘋秋<sup>73</sup>

My many years of poverty are still elegant to me  
I enjoy staying in the Jōmeiji temple pavilion near the river.  
Barley is green, rape blossoms are yellow, celebrating the spring now.  
Soon we will see again the red joint weed and the white duckweed of autumn.

This poem is about a simple but *fūryū* style of life. Nakamura Hiroshi pointed out that Sōseki discussed the effect of colour words in his *Bungakuron*: words such as ‘red lamp

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<sup>71</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.18 p. 107

<sup>72</sup> Saitō Junji, *Natsume Sōseki Kanshi Kō* p.31

<sup>73</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, Vol. 18, p.109

and green drink (紅燈綠酒) 'green barley and yellow rape blossoms (麦綠菜黄)'

'white duckweed and red jointweed (白蘋紅蓼)' 'blue mountain and white cloud (青山白雲)'.<sup>74</sup>

Shiki wrote *Nanakusashū* from the Jōmeiji situated east of Kuroda river. Sōseki was envious of the fact that Shiki could enjoy *fūryū*, and he wrote about Shiki's former aspiration to become a politician in the poem below:

江東避俗養天真      一代風流餞逝春  
誰知今日惜花客      却是当年劍舞人<sup>75</sup>

You ran away from worldly affairs to the east of the river

Spending spring as a relaxed person who enjoys detached elegance

Does anyone know that the one who enjoys the flower blossoms today

Was the one who dreamed in full vigour of youth to be a powerful politician?

Sōseki knew about Shiki's attraction to the girl at the rice-cake shop at Jōmeiji temple and wanted to let him know that the girl was still missing him. We can tell from this poem that Sōseki was close enough to Shiki to know his personal feelings towards this girl:

長命寺中鬻餅家      当壚少女美如花  
芳姿一段可憐處      別後思君紅淚加<sup>76</sup>

At the rice-cake shop in Jōmeiji

The young girl is beautiful like a flower

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<sup>74</sup> Nakamura Hiroshi, *SōsekiKanshi no Sekai*, p.21

<sup>75</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, Vol. 18, p.110

<sup>76</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, Vol. 18, p.117



A tinge of sadness emanates from her figure,  
She is tearful, missing you after your departure.

In July, 1889 Shiki went back to Matsuyama and Sōseki travelled the Hosō area for a month with four school friends. Sōseki wrote about his experiences during this period in Chinese in *Bokusetsuroku*. This essay was a masterpiece, displaying Sōseki's passion for *fūryū*. Poems were scattered throughout the essay, which gave it diversity and intensity. When Shiki came back from Matsuyama, he was impressed with this work and expressed his respect for Sōseki's literary talent. From that time, Shiki and Sōseki exchanged poetry more frequently.

The following are examples of *kanshi* in *Bokusetsuroku*. The two poems below came with the comment: "The scenery in Kōtsu excels in elegance and has the flare of a virtuous man. The scenery in Kubota is rough and unusual as if a crafty man. A virtuous man does not startle people, thus women are comfortable with him. A crafty man is difficult to predict, thus eccentric people enjoy the unusual shapes. Here I am trying to write two comparative sets of poems."<sup>77</sup>

風穩波平七月天      韶光入夏自悠然  
出雲帆影白千点      総在水天髣髴邊。<sup>78</sup>

Sky in July when winds and waves are gentle

Radiant light in early summer: perfect composure

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<sup>77</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, Vol. 18, p.520

<sup>78</sup> *Sōseki Zenshu*, Vol. 18, p.118

Hundreds, thousands of white sails cast shadows

On the roiling clouds

At the horizon among layers and layers of mist

西方決眚望茫茫      幾丈巨濤拍亂塘

水盡孤帆天際去      長風吹滿太平洋<sup>79</sup>

Gazing intensely to the west, the ocean looks vast and distant

Huge waves keep hitting the shore

At the edge of the horizon, a lonely sail vanishes from the sky.

A strong wind is blowing over the Pacific Ocean.

Sōseki's description of the scenery and his selection of Chinese characters in these poems were rarely seen before in classical Chinese poetry. Both poems use traditional Chinese metaphors, comparing the scenery to human characters, yet it is the actual description of the scene – for example, a big wave hitting a cliff and a small boat tossing on it --which conveys the real atmosphere of the places. Sōseki uses the words 'hit (拍)' 'blow (吹)' as if the wave and the wind are living creatures. His technique of personification makes his *kanshi* original and alive and gives a unique and individualistic quality to the Chinese poetic form.

In answer to Sōseki's note, Shiki commented that a virtuous man does not necessarily win over a crafty man, which shows the *kanshi* writing was not only a creative literary activity but also a part of gentleman's training in the Confucian tradition for a virtuous

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<sup>79</sup> Sōseki Zenshū, Vol. 18, p.119

mind. In his 'Fudemakase' (1884-6)<sup>80</sup> Shiki elaborated on Sōseki's use of personification, an English technique. He praised Sōseki, saying that someone who was good at English usually lacked ability in Chinese and someone who was good at Japanese was usually poor in mathematics. But Sōseki was good at both. Since everyone knew that Sōseki was good at English, Shiki wanted to point out that Sōseki was good in Chinese writing and Chinese poetry too. Shiki even mentioned that Sōseki's talent would be noted long into the future. It was natural that Sōseki was encouraged by this comment and wrote *kanshi* even more enthusiastically.

*Bokusetsuroku* is an important resource for studying not only the nature and quality of Sōseki's early *kanshi* but also how Sōseki and Shiki's relationship developed during their student days. Sōseki signed his pen-name on the title page as "Pig headed man" (*ganfu*) while Shiki signed his 'review of *Bokusetsuroku*' as "Otter Fisherman" (*dassai gyofu*)<sup>81</sup>. At the time, they were addressing each other in their correspondence by many different terms: for instance, Sōseki call himself 'wildflower on the road in Kikui country (*Kikui no sato, nobe no hana*)'<sup>82</sup> or 'lazy one in Kikui village (*Kikui machi no namake mono*)' while calling Shiki 'genius big brother (*Saiki kei*)'<sup>83</sup>, or 'deepening valley of gods in Meiji (*Meiji no shin koku utata*)'<sup>84</sup>.

<sup>80</sup> Masaoka Shikishū, *Meiji Bungaku Zenshū* vol. 53, p.15

<sup>81</sup> The otter's den (*dassai*), another pennames of Shiki's, originated from the fact that otters put everything side by side before dedicating them to god. In the case of a poet, he looks up and references many books before he writes poems. *Sōseki Zenshū*, Vol.18 p.124

<sup>82</sup> Wada Shigeki (ed.), *Sōseki. Shiki Ofuku shokanshū*, p.427

<sup>83</sup> Wada Shigeki (ed.), *Sōseki. Shiki Ofuku shokanshū*, p.427

<sup>84</sup> Wada Shigeki (ed.), *Sōseki. Shiki Ofuku shokanshū*, p.427

Shiki wrote a letter in August 1889, calling Sōseki ‘my beloved husband’ and himself a ‘wife’. This letter is no longer extant; however, Sōseki’s reply is recorded in *Bokusetsuroku*, with a preface to a poem indicating that it was a response to Shiki’s humour:

鹹氣射顔顔欲黄      醜容对鏡易悲傷  
馬齡今日廿三歲      始被佳人呼我郎<sup>85</sup>

I have become tanned by seawater and sun,  
My face looks so ugly that I become sad when I look in the mirror.  
At the age of twenty-three for the first time,  
I am called ‘darling’ by a beautiful woman.

Sōseki clearly chose the character rō (郎), which meant a husband. He also addressed his letter to Shiki in September <sup>86</sup> ‘from husband (郎君) to wife (妻)’. The content of this letter was not about a confession of love, or sexual involvement. Rather, Sōseki jokingly mentioned that Shiki should feel grateful to his husband’s (Sōseki’s) generosity since he spent money to post the letter even though his financial situation was poor.

*The Collection of Letters exchanged between Sōseki and Shiki* <sup>87</sup> is another valuable primary resource for an understanding of their relationship. They exchanged letters from 1889 till 1901, the year before Shiki died, while Sōseki was in England. Their letters were about their personal feelings and situations, about theories of syntax in

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<sup>85</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, Vol. 18, Iwanami shoten, 1995. p.123.

<sup>86</sup> Ōoka Makoto (ed.), ‘Ōfuku shokan’, *Shiki to Sōseki, Shiki Senshū* vol 9, p.159

<sup>87</sup> Wada Shigeki (ed.), *Sōseki. Shiki Ōfuku shokanshū*, p.428

writing, about poetry, and about news of the people around them. Nevertheless, the psychological aspect of their relationship was unique. Shiki was an idealist who played the role of a leader and big brother, yet who needed a good friend like Sōseki who understood him. Sōseki was keen observer of humanity, yet who needed positive reassurance, which Shiki provided. The outgoing dreamer, Shiki called himself a ‘wife’ to the soul-searching, stern and complex character of Sōseki.

Many literary figures in early Meiji era valued their friendships highly and presented their works together under the collective name of a society or an association. Shiki had many friends and worked with them on various literary activities as a group. The exhibition catalogue *Shiki to Yūjintachi*<sup>88</sup> includes exchanges with Shiki of the correspondence and creative writings of well-known Meiji literary figures. However, the intensity and the characteristics of these relationships were different with each person. Shiki called Sōseki a “highly respected friend” (*iyū*) and regarded him highly for his talents; meanwhile, Sōseki was attracted by Shiki’s positive personality. This psychological frame of ‘respect and attraction’ would be seen to be the origin of their calling of each other ‘husband and wife’. In the Meiji period, women were not usually included in these elite groups of creative thinkers and writers whose aim was to introduce new ideas to society. Therefore, the term “husband and wife” could be used symbolically between male friends.

Sōseki and Shiki’s relationship has been discussed by many literary scholars in Japan.

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<sup>88</sup> Matsuyama Shiritsu Shiki Museum, *Shiki to Yūjintachi*, 2002.

Takahashi Hideo described their relationship as “hermetic”, developing slowly over a period of time, through observing each other’s personalities and through their mutual interests. He added in explanation that the word ‘hermetic’ comes from Greek mythology and refers to something hidden, tightly closed or sealed, Hermes being the messenger god who acts for and connects many different gods, people and things and the guardian deity of travellers, merchants, thieves, musicians. He is considered a symbol or an embodiment of the intangible aura of wisdom, and of talent. Greek mythology later folded him together with the Egyptian god Toto to create Hermestorismekistos, who is three times stronger than Hermes. From this belief arose the theory of alchemy in which the sealing of a glass tube brings about a result. This is the origin of the meaning of “hermetic” as ‘sealed tight’ or ‘not including others’. A pure and intense friendship, with many positive things emanating, is a “hermetic” friendship.<sup>90</sup>

Takahashi Hideo further argued that the nature of friendship between Sōseki and Shiki was similar to a type of love. The strength of the relationship derived from a purity of emotion that would not allow any impure matter or a third person between them.

Takahashi gave as example the jealousy that Shiki felt when Sōseki wrote him a farewell letter on his departure for Matsuyama, which included a discussion of some works by Mori Ogai. Shiki felt jealous that Sōseki was taking up this precious letter with extraneous matter about a third person, although Sōseki had believed that Shiki

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<sup>90</sup> Takahashi Hideo, ‘Hermesuteki yūjō—Sōseki to Shiki no aida’ *Sōseki Kenkyū* No.7, p.40

would have been interested in Ogai's works. Takahashi concluded that this emotional intensity was a sign of their hermetic friendship and contributed to their creativity<sup>91</sup>

*Bokusetsuroku* is composed of many practice poems following set rhymes. Sōseki and Shiki often wrote and exchange *kanshi* on the same rhyme. For example,

Shiki wrote the poem below to the same rhyme as Sōseki's previous poem in which he talked about his suntanned face and calling himself a husband, (黄、傷、郎) ;

'To Natsume Sōseki, staying in Boshu sea resort'

寄夏目漱石漱石時在房州海水浴場

總房臨海夏常涼      鹹水醫病若藥傷

黃卷青編消永晝      清風澹月伴漁郎<sup>92</sup>

How cool Sobo is in summer, since it is near the sea.

The seawater, like medicine, is a good cure.

Spending time reading books during the long summer day,

The fisherman accompanies the cool breeze and the moonlight.

In answer, Sōseki wrote the poem below with a preface "I have not read anything for a long time, since I am tired mentally and physically" on the rhyme scheme (閑、間、山)

脫却塵懷百事閑      儘遊碧水白雲間

仙鄉自古無文字      不見青編只見山<sup>93</sup>

I am in restful mind, escaping from all the worldly dust.

<sup>91</sup> Takahashi Hideo, 'Hermesudeki yūjō—Sōseki to Shiki no aida' *Sōseki Kenkyū* No.7, p.43-44

<sup>92</sup> Ōda Rigyō, *Kaidō no Hana—Shiki Kanshi to Sōseki*, p.62

<sup>93</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, Vol 18. p.125

Enjoying the beauty of the place of clear water and white clouds,  
This magic land does not have writing,  
I gaze at the mountain instead of reading books.

In reply, Shiki wrote: “If we live in worldly dust, it is difficult to obtain pure, clear sentences. If we live among deep mountains and valleys, our sentences become lofty and high. If we live near big rivers and oceans, our sentences become wide and big. This is the gift of the god of poetry.”<sup>94</sup> Sōseki may have felt that Shiki had exaggerated a bit, and sent him the following poem on the rhyme scheme (塵、人、神)

No title, August, 1890

江山容不俗懷塵	君是功名場裏人
憐殺病軀多客氣	漫將翰墨論詩神 <sup>95</sup>

I am wondering whether nature will accept the dust of the world.  
You are successful and are used to worldly matters.  
Your energy is impressive, in spite of your illness,  
You are writing energetically about nature and the god of poetry.

Wada Toshio<sup>96</sup> also pointed out that we can see how close Shiki and Sōseki were by the fact that Sōseki could make fun of Shiki openly like this.

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<sup>94</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 259

<sup>95</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, Vol 18. p.143

<sup>96</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 241



The following poem by Shiki was written at the Mitsui temple in Otsu near Biwako, when he was returning to Tokyo from Matsuyama, in answer to Sōseki's poem quoted above; Shiki uses the same rhyme scheme 塵、人、神、 and the phrase 'worldly dust' to start this poem.

Dedicated to Natsume Sōseki from Miidera, August, 1890

琵琶湖携筆避紅塵      山紫水明憶美人  
一夜天風吹我忝      白雲皎月遇詩神<sup>97</sup>

Escaping from the dusty world and writing poetry near the Biwako.

Near a purple mountain and clear water, I think about a beautiful woman.

One night, the wind will blow and will carry me,

I will meet the god of poetry in white clouds and bright moon light.

Sōseki again wrote the following poem to Shiki and recorded it in *Bokusetsuroku*, with the preface 'Dreamed about a little female cuckoo on a hired boat while going upstream Tonegawa; the cuckoo does not necessarily refer to a woman.'

賃舟溯刀水舟中 夢鶉娘鶉娘者女 名, 而非女也

扁舟行尽幾波塘      滿岸新秋芳草長  
一片離愁消不得      白蘋花底夢鶉娘<sup>98</sup>

The small boat passed a bank.

The bank is full of autumn grass.

I cannot get rid of the loneliness of separation,

I dreamed of a little female cuckoo among the floating white flowers.

<sup>97</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Kaidōno Hana—Shiki Kanshi to Sōseki*, p.101

<sup>98</sup> *Sōseki Zenshu*, Vol 18. p. 133

According to Wada Toshio<sup>99</sup> the female cuckoo referred to Shiki since Shiki often referred to himself as a wife, and cuckoo was one of his nicknames. Whether Sōseki really dreamed of Shiki or not, with this image Sōseki wanted to express his affection for Shiki.

While Sōseki was writing *Bokusetsuroku*, he composed many other poems as well, describing the scenery surrounded him. The following poem was not included in *Bokusetsuroku* but was sent to Shiki in a letter. It is a good illustration of the characteristics of Sōseki's *kanshi* at the time.

山路觀楓

石苔沐雨滑難攀

渡水穿林往又還

处处鹿声尋不得

白雲紅葉滿千山。<sup>100</sup>

Looking at a Maple Tree on the Mountain Road

The moss on the rocks looked velvety and shiny, like freshly washed hair.

The stream is flowing round through the forest and back again.

I do not know where this sound of deer comes from,

White clouds and red maple leaves fill the whole mountain

This poem appeared with three waka below.

杣人もしき着るらし今朝の雨に紅葉の色の袖に透れば。

This morning, even woodcutters seem to be wearing brocade,

The rain tints the sleeves with the color of the autumn leaves

<sup>99</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*. p. 239

<sup>100</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, p.142

人知らぬ秋の錦を見よとかや白雲ふかく鹿ぞよぶなる。

While looking at the unseen brocade of autumn,

White clouds got thicker and hearing the callings of the deer.

なく鹿の声をしるべにたずねきてやつれ衣に錦おりかく。<sup>101</sup>

Looking for the place where the cry of deer comes from,

Silk brocade covering the ragged clothes.

Sako Junichirō quotes Sōseki's postscript that using words that do not contain colors and fragrance was like saying hello to a wintry blast.<sup>102</sup> Sako Junichirō notes that Sōseki particularly enjoyed the use of color in Chinese poetry. Yoshikawa Kōjirō quotes Sōseki's assertion in *Bungakuron* that "If we take away the concept of colour from the poetry, more than half of the poetry would be destroyed and be empty and tasteless...According to Wundt's theory, white reminds people of splendour, green calms people, and red expresses power and influence."<sup>103</sup> The use of 'white cloud and red leaves' in this poem, is only the starting point of Sōseki's exploration of color in his poetry.

The following poem not only shows how pessimistic Sōseki was and how he felt that life was futile, but also how he made a conscientious effort to live truthfully. The fact that this poem was sent to Shiki shows the closeness between them.

無題 明治二十三年 八月末

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<sup>101</sup> Quoted in Sako Junichirō, *Sōseki Shishū Zenshaku*, p.5

<sup>102</sup> Sako Junichirō, *Sōseki Shishū Zenshaku*, p.51

<sup>103</sup> Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *Yoshikawa Kōjirō Zenshū* Vol.18, p.132

仙人墜俗界	遂不免喜悲
啼血又吐血	憔悴憐君姿
漱石又枕石	固陋歡吾痴
君痴猶可癒	僕痴不可医
素懷定沈鬱	愁緒乱如糸
浩歌時幾曲	(一句欠)
一曲唾壺碎	二曲双淚垂
曲闌呼咄咄	衷情欲訴誰
白雲蓬勃起	天際看咬螭
笑指函山頂	去臥葦湖湄
歲月固悠久	宇宙独無涯
蜉蝣飛湫上	大鵬嗤其卑
嗤者亦泯滅	得喪皆一時
寄語功名客	役役欲何為 <sup>104</sup>

No title, end of August, 1890

You, even as a hermit, have descended to the mundane world,

And in the end are unable to escape from joy and sadness.

Trying to the point of bleeding.

Feeling sorry for your worn-out body.

Whether 'Sōseki' was a stone for cleaning the teeth or a pillow stone,

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<sup>104</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, Vol 18. P. 145

Accept my own stubborn stupid desire to avoid the world.  
Your illness can be cured,  
But my stubbornness cannot be helped.  
I always feel gloomy,  
All kinds of worries come to me at once like a bundle of untidy threads.  
At times I sing a song loudly.  
At the first tune, I hit a container rhythmically,  
At the second tune, tears fall.  
When the music stops,  
I cannot find someone to talk to.  
White clouds swelling up in the sky,  
Make the shape of an ascending dragon.  
It would be a good idea to live on top of Kansan  
And spend a relaxed life near the lake.  
Time passes slowly and the world is vast.  
The heron would laugh at the fly that flies just above the pool,  
But the heron also perishes.  
After all, gain and loss are momentary events.  
People strive to be successful.  
I would like to ask them,  
What is the use of all this effort?

Komiya Toyotaka<sup>106</sup> attributed the main source of Sōseki's pain to his stubbornness and his illness. Because of these weaknesses, Sōseki could not cope in his daily life.

Wada Toshio believes that Sōseki's suffering came also from his distaste for unkind and selfish human behavior. He adds that in this poem, Sōseki used quite a lot of contrasting phrases, which became a distinctive feature of his later poems.<sup>108</sup>

After finishing *Bokusetsuroku*, Sōseki travelled around the Hakone area from the end of August until September 1890 and wrote thirteen poems, which he sent to Shiki for correction. The poems are mostly depictions of scenes around the Hakone mountains: eight of them are entitled 'Kanzan Zatsuei'. *Kanza* is the Chinese style name of Hakone mountains and *zatsuei* refers to poems on miscellaneous themes or subjects; three of the poems are about sending off friends from Hakone. Sōseki faithfully obeyed the rules of *kanshi* writing. The following are some examples:

函山雜咏 八首 [其 一]

昨夜着征衣 今朝入翠微

雲深山欲滅 天闊鳥頻飛

驛馬鈴聲遠 行人笑語稀

蕭蕭三十里 孤客已思歸<sup>109</sup>

Kanzan Zatsuei I, September 1890

Last night, getting ready for travel

This morning I enter into a green mountain

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<sup>106</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.245

<sup>108</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.245

<sup>109</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18 p.149

The mountain disappears among thick clouds  
 Birds are flying up to the vast, open sky  
 Remote is the sound of a bell from the horse at the station  
 Scarce is the chatting and laughing of the travellers.  
 Lonely, a long thirty *li* away,  
 A lone traveller thinking of returning home.

Shiki commented that the first half of the poem is elegant and solid, and the latter half is calm and peaceful.<sup>110</sup>

The following poem describes actual mountain climbing, but this becomes a metaphor for a state of mind that is withdrawn high above mundane life. Shiki commented that the metaphors of ‘cloud gushing out from footsteps and roads are hanging down from headstone’ were fairly common, but were still good. Yoshikawa points out that some of the phrases, such as *kuhen* (side of the sky) or *boto* (from the stone above the head) are not in the Chinese dictionary. These expressions had been originally created by Japanese poets and had become common in Japanese *kanshi* in the Meiji era.

函嶺勢崢嶸	登來廿里程
雲從鞋底湧	路自帽頭生
孤駅空辺起	癡閑天際橫
停筇時一顧	蒼靄隔田城 <sup>111</sup>

Kanzan Zatsuei II

The force of the Hakone mountain-peaks is high and sharp.

<sup>110</sup> Quoted by Yoshikawa Kōjirō in *Yoshikawa Kōjirō Zenshū*, vol. 18, p.133

<sup>111</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18 p.150

Climbing up about twenty *li*.  
 Clouds are gushing out from underfoot  
 The road flows down from the mountain's stony topknot.  
 The lonely station left behind in rhyme looks,  
 like an old building which is deserted in the sky.  
 As I stop for a while, to look back  
 The blue mist separates the mountain from the town below.

来相峰勢雄	恰似上蒼穹
落日千山外	号風万壑中
馬徑逢水絶	鳥路入天通
決眚西方望	玲瓏岳雪紅 <sup>112</sup>

### Kanzan Zatsuei III

Arriving in Sō country, the force of the mountain-peaks is great  
 As if they are reaching to the sky.  
 The sun sets over thousands of mountains.  
 The wind blows into ten thousand valleys.  
 The road traveled by horses is blocked by water  
 The passage of the birds is through to heaven.  
 Looking intently towards the west,  
 Crimson is the sparkling sunset on the snow-covered mountain Fuji.

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<sup>112</sup> *Sōseki Zenshu vol. 18* p.152



The expression “mountains are so high as if reaching to the sky” is a line from Li Bai. Sōseki enjoys this place in nature where his links to daily life are cut off and where his soul can freely meditate on universal truths. Shiki described first part as magnificent and masculine.<sup>113</sup>

According to Iida Rigyō, Sōseki was so impressed by the view of the Hakone mountains that he could temporarily forget about his eye disease and the difficult relations with his friends.<sup>114</sup>

飄然辭故國	來宿葦湖湄
排悶何須酒	遣閑只有詩
故園秋至早	癡道馬行遲
一夜征人夢	無端落柳枝 <sup>115</sup>

#### Kanzan Zatsuei IV

Leaving hometown of Tokyo rather suddenly without any particular plan,

I arrive at Ashi Lake and stay on the shore.

The way to console my agony is not by drinking

But spending time writing poetry

Autumn starts early among the old ruins

A horse moves slowly on an old road.

A traveller somehow saw in a dream

A branch of a willow tree.

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<sup>113</sup> Quoted by Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *Yoshikawa Kōjirō Zenshū*, vol. 18, p. 135

<sup>114</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Shinyaku Sōseki Shishū*, p. 62

<sup>115</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.18 p. 153

Shiki commented that this poem belongs to the style of the T'ang period. Yoshikawa Kōjirō believed that Sōseki might actually have had a lover at the time and have actually dreamt about her. He identified Sōseki's allusion to Tu Fu in the expression *haimon* (get rid of the sadness) and *ikan* (spending the time).<sup>116</sup>

Sako Junichirō noted that the branch of willow comes from a Han dynasty story, in which city people parting at a bridge give each other a willow branch. He added that the willow branch was sometimes addressed as a beautiful woman in the works of Bai Zhuyi and other Chinese poets.<sup>117</sup>

Iida Rigyō interprets the last line as meaning that Sōseki had seen an unforgettable woman in his dream, just for a short time.<sup>118</sup>

百念冷如灰	靈泉洗俗埃
鳥啼天自曙	衣冷雨將來
幽樹沒青靄	閑花落碧苔
悠悠歸思少	臥見白雲堆 <sup>119</sup>

Kanzan Zatsuei V

Various thoughts cool down like ashes.

Miraculous spring water cleans away the worldly dust

Day breaks with the song of birds

Clothes are made cold by morning dew likely to bring rain.

Thick forest is fading into a blue mist

<sup>116</sup> Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *Yoshikawa Kōjirō Zenshū*, vol. 18, p.136

<sup>117</sup> Sako Junichirō, *Sōseki Shishū Zenshaku*, p.59

<sup>118</sup> Iida Rigyo, *Shinyaku Sōseki Shishū*, p. 63

<sup>119</sup> *Sōseki Zenshō* vol. 18 p.155

Flower petals quietly fall down over the mossy ground.

Leisurely at ease, without thinking of going back

I lie down and gaze up at the movement of white cloud.

The things that happen every day and the thoughts following the events are perceived by Sōseki as a burning sensation which has to be cooled down. He wishes to find some spring water that can take away all the pollution and uncleanness. His fundamental belief that nature can purify humanity and that in essence humanity is clean leads him to travel remote areas and to write poems. This attentiveness to nature gave Sōseki peace and rest.

Shiki commented that the last part of this poem was a reminder of Tao Yuan-ming's poem 'Relaxing and watching Nanshan.'<sup>120</sup>

During the Hakone tour, Sōseki's chronic eye disease, trachoma, deteriorated and he expressed his discomfort and an annoyance in Kanzan Zatsuei VI and VII, making his illness a metaphor for the annoying situations of daily life.

奈此宿痾何	眼花凝似珂
豪懷空挫折	壯志欲蹉跎
山老雲行急	雨新水響多
半宵眠不得	燈下默看蛾 <sup>121</sup>

Kanzan Zatsuei VI.

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<sup>120</sup> Quoted by Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *Yoshikawa Kōjirō Zenshū*, vol. 18, p.137

<sup>121</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 18 p.156

What can I do with my chronic illness?

My failing vision is blurred as if looking through beads.

My grand ideas are failing,

And my courage is stumbling.

Even clouds have to be in a hurry, as the mountain is old.

The sound of the stream after the rain is fiercely noisy.

I cannot sleep until midnight,

Silently, watching the moss near the lamp.

Sōseki starts the poem with a lamentation, bewailing the fact that he can do nothing about his illness. He described his helplessness, the anxiety and the annoyance realistically.

三年猶患眼            何處好醫盲

崖圧浴場立            湖連牧野平

雲過峰面碎            風至樹頭鳴

偏悦遊靈境            入眸景物明<sup>122</sup>

Kanzan Zatsuei VII.

For three years, I have had an eye illness

Not knowing where I can find a good doctor.

Soaring cliffs stand on the beach,

A lake opens wide joining to the pasture.

Clouds are dispersed at the tops of high mountains

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<sup>122</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18 p.158

Wind is crying at the tops of trees.

The only joy I have is immersing myself in nature,

Into the bright scene before my eyes.

Three years is not necessarily the actual time span that Sōseki had this eye disease: the phrase originated from a poem titled ‘Eye Illness’ by the T’ang poet Zhang Ji.<sup>123</sup>

Contrasting parallelism is evident in lines 3 and 4: the verticality of the soaring cliff and the horizontal view of the lake and fields.

恰似泛波鷗	乘閑到处留
溪声晴夜雨	山色暮天秋
家湿菌生壁	湖明月滿舟
歸期何足意	去路白雲悠。 <sup>124</sup>

Kanzan Zatsuei VIII

Like a seagull floating on wavy waters’

I will enjoy leisurely wherever I stay.

The sound of valley waters is clear after a night rainfall,

The autumn colour of mountains sets in the evening sky.

Mold grow on humid walls inside the house,

A boat is filled with moonlight on bright lake

I do not care when I should return

White clouds will take me back home restfully.

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<sup>123</sup> Sako Junichirō, *Sōseki Shishū Zenshaku*, p. 63

<sup>124</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.18 p.160

Sōseki compares himself to a sea gull floating on wavy waters, a line taken from Tu Fu. In line 3 *keisei* (溪声) and line 4 *sanshoku* (山色) originate from a line of the Song poet, Su Shi entitled ‘To the Eastern Mountain Hermit’<sup>125</sup>

Sōseki uses the imagery of going to fairyland by riding a white cloud to describe his return to Tokyo after resting in the mountains. Watanabe Shōichi noted <sup>126</sup> that ‘white cloud’ appears in Chuang-tzu’s ‘Heaven and Earth’: ‘to go to heaven by riding a white cloud’. Thus ‘white cloud’ refers to the place where the heavenly king lives. Again, the phrase appeared in Kansan’s poem many times. Tendaiyama, where Kansan lived, was called the hometown of the white cloud by the Zen priest Zentsuki. Here, “white cloud” carries the image of a place outside the human world, the place where enlightened people live, or a fairyland in beautiful nature where Taoist hermits with supernatural power live.

During the Hakone tour, Sōseki also wrote three poems about sending off a friend and returning to Hakone, using the rhyme scheme 微, 衣, 歸.

送友到元函根 三首、      [其 一]  
風滿扁舟秋署微      水光嵐色照征衣  
出京旬日滯山館      還卜朗晴送客歸<sup>127</sup>

Sending off friend and returning to Hakone 1

<sup>125</sup> Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *Yoshikawa Kōjirō Zenshū*, vol. 18, p.139

<sup>126</sup> Watanabe Shōichi, *Sōseki to Kanshi*, p.28

<sup>127</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū* vol 18. p. 161

The wind filling the sails of a boat takes away the remaining heat of an autumn.  
The light on the water, the haze of the mountains are reflecting travelling clothes.  
I left Tokyo and stayed in the mountain house for ten days.  
Now I choose one fine day, and send home a guest.

[ 其 二 ]

煙澹天澄秋氣微                      風塵不着旧征衣  
東都諸友如相問                      飽看江山猶未歸

Sending off friend and returning to Hakone 2

I feel a faint sign of autumn, as the mist thins and the sky gets high.  
The old travelling clothes did not have a trace of worldly dust.  
I would like friends in Tokyo to know, if they ask how I am--  
I am fascinated by beautiful nature and am not ready to return to Tokyo.

Yoshikawa Kōjirō identified the allusion in line three of this poem to the T'ang poet  
Wang Changling's poem titled ' At the Hibiscus Inn Parting with Xin Jian'.<sup>128</sup>

[ 其 三 ]

客中送客暗愁微                      秋人函山露滿衣  
為我願言相識士                      狂生出国不知歸<sup>129</sup>

Sending off friend and returning to Hakone 3

I feel a little melancholy after sending off a guest while I am travelling.  
Autumn has come into Kansan and dew has collected on my clothes.  
What I would like to say, to let my acquaintances know--  
The crazy person has left his hometown and does not think of returning home.

<sup>128</sup> Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *Yoshikawa Kōjirō Zenshū*, vol. 18, p.140

<sup>129</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18, p.163

Saito Junji's<sup>131</sup> detailed examination of Sōseki's use of the words *anshū* (暗愁) and the more frequent *kanshū* (閑愁) shows that *kanshū* refers to a sadness that arises involuntarily. It is the state of mind of a person leisurely and quietly resting in nature. Sako Junichirō emphasized the sadness which is part of that frame of mind of people withdrawing from involvement in human affairs and immersing themselves in the essential "emptiness" of nature.<sup>132</sup> The Chinese character *kan* (leisure) appeared more frequently in Sōseki's poetry later when he wrote on the themes or titles of the *nanga* paintings. However in this poem, Sōseki expresses his sadness as *anshu*, which does not necessarily include the concept of 'leisurely' or 'involuntarily'. Here the focus is on the 'shadow' of an evening after a bright day.

As a general review of what Sōseki had written during the Hakone tour, Shiki commented: "Each and every phrase is skilfully composed. These poems are deeply considered and careful in detail compared to the innocent poems in the *Bokusetsuroku*. Why not leave it to Sōseki himself to make a critique, instead of me."<sup>133</sup>

Shiki visited Sōseki's house in Tokyo in January 1892 and wrote the following poem.

題漱石書屋壁上所貼阿艷小照

誰摸穠艷筆傳神	半面鏡中別有春
可恨海棠紅一朵	東風昨夜嫁詩人 <sup>134</sup>

'For Oen's photo hanging on the wall of Sōseki's Study', 1892.

Who painted this charming lady's portrait, like a flower?

<sup>131</sup> Saito Junji, *Natsume Sōseki Kanshiko*, p.26-39

<sup>132</sup> Sako Junichirō, *Sōseki Shishū Zenshaku*, p.67

<sup>133</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū* vol 18 p.167

<sup>134</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Kaidō no Hana : Shiki kanshi to Sōseki*, p.115



The touch is divine: the picture is so alive.

The image on the mirror is young and beautiful like the spring.

It is a shame that the lady, blown down like a wild rose

by the spring wind last night, is to marry to a poet.

Morita Sōhei commented in his essay ‘Women’s Faces that My Teacher Liked’ that Oen, a famous geisha whose portrait Sōseki bought, had an oval face with a bright, intelligent air. I was not surprised at all to hear that Sōseki liked that type of girl’s face.”<sup>135</sup>

As a response to Soseki’s *Kanzan Zatsuei*, completed in 1890, Shiki composed *Kisozasshi Sanjūshū* during 1892. It contained thirty seven-character *risshi*, written over more than a year, about his journey to Kiso, starting from Ueno station in Tokyo and going all the way to Matsuyama. Kokubun Seian, the Meiji kanshi poet and editor of the ‘*Kanshi* Critical Column’ in the *Nihon Shimbun*, believed that these poems showed Shiki’s competency in free-style *kanshi*, selecting fifteen of them for publication in the *Nihon Shimbun*.<sup>136</sup> Wada Toshio considered the *Kisozasshi Sanjūshū* the peak of Shiki’s poems of this period<sup>137</sup>, while Iida Rigyō commented that these poems had a strong impact on general poetry readers at the time.<sup>138</sup>

The first poem, ‘Sono Ichi’, was included in the list for publication by Kokubun Seian:

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<sup>135</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Kaidō no Hana : Shiki kanshi to Sōseki*, p.116

<sup>136</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Kaidō no Hana : Shiki kanshi to Sōseki*, p.117

<sup>137</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 201

<sup>138</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Kaidō no Hana: Shiki kanshi to Sōseki*, p.125

群峯如劍刺蒼空 路入岐蘇形勝雄  
古寺鍾傳層樹外 絕崖路斷亂雲中  
百年豪傑荒苔紫 萬里河山落日紅  
欲問虎拏龍鬪跡 蕭蕭驛馬獨嘶風<sup>139</sup>

Sono Ichi

The pointed mountains tops pierced the high sky like daggers,  
The road turned into a male shape entering Kisotani.  
The bell of an old temple echoed from the other side of the forest,  
The road over the cliff disappeared into the clouds.  
The tomb of the brave hero mossy,  
The mountains and rivers far away reddening by the sunset.  
Visiting the ruins of past wars,  
A lonely horse neighed in the evening wind.

Shiki portrayed the scenery in an unusual way, as if Kiso Yoshinaka (1153-1184) one of the famous Minamoto clan, was still alive, even though it was a depiction of the actual scene of his grave. The description was even stranger than sketching an old painting: it was more like shooting a scene in an historical film around Kisotani using the camera of the heart.

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<sup>139</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Kaidō no Hana : Shiki kanshi to Sōseki*, p.116

<sup>139</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 201

Iida Rigyō pointed out the highly professional effect of Shiki's use of parallelism in all of the eight lines of this poem, against the general trend of placing only lines five and six in parallel.<sup>140</sup>

The last poem, 'Sono Sanjū', was passed over by Kokubun:

高下棧橋翠壁巉 冷冷點滴透征衫

偶看半霽半陰妙 豈有一山一水凡

奇草吐雲攀怪石 妖禽呼雨宿長杉

此間神秘不容語 長使行人口默緘<sup>141</sup>

Between the cliffs enveloped in green, bridges high and low.

Passing over the bridges, the water-drops dampen the clothes, cold to the skin.

The contrast of light and dark on the mountain scene

Make it unique, different from the usual mountain and water scene.

Unusual plants on the strangely shaped peak of the rocky mountain,

And birds on the top of the pine trees crying as if asking for rain.

The traveller, unable to express in words this mystical atmosphere,

Walks on in silence.

Shiki sketched the mountain scenes as he saw them in this poem.

In 1893, Sōseki graduated from Tokyo University and started to work as an English teacher at Tokyo Higher Normal School. He was diagnosed with the early stages of

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<sup>140</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Kaidō no Hana: Shiki kanshi to Sōseki*, p.126

<sup>141</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 202

consumption and suffered a nervous breakdown. In April 1895, he resigned and moved to Matsuyama High School; one year later he moved to Kumamoto High School. The psychological changes in Sōseki at the time are described by Yu Beongcheon :

Sōseki soon fell victim to a vague, though real, anxiety when he discovered an insuperable gap between his life and his profession. Now aware that teaching was not meant to be his vocation, he could not yet be certain what should be.

Perhaps it was frustration which drove him to a Zen master for a time, and then to Matsuyama as a high school teacher, a decision shocking to everyone except Sōseki himself.<sup>142</sup>

Meanwhile, Shiki went to China in March 1895 during the Sino-Japanese war and stayed around one month as a military reporter. However, a peace treaty was signed in May and Shiki had to return to Japan. He had a haemorrhage on shipboard and was hospitalised in Kobe.

Sōseki wrote five poems in Matsuyama and sent them to Shiki at the hospital in Kobe in May 1895. The following are some examples:

無題 [其 二]

辜負東風出故關	鳥啼花謝幾時還
離愁似夢迢迢淡	幽思与雲澹澹間
才子群中只守拙	小人圈裏独持頑
寸心空托一杯酒	劍氣如霜照醉顏 <sup>143</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Yu, Beongcheon, *Natsume Sōseki*, p.24

<sup>143</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.18 p. 177

Untitled

With the spring wind behind my back, I left my hometown.

Birds were crying over the falling petals, yet not knowing when to return.

Departing sadness on the way became faint: dream-like,

Intense thoughts dispersed like clouds: serenity

I want to be just a clod amongst the clever,

And a mule amongst the cunning.

As futile as entrusting the heart to a glass of sake,

Is the cold gleam of youthful ambitions of youth shining in the drunken face.

This poem expresses Sōseki wish to retain his unskilful (cloddish), stubborn (as a mule) attitude, in the face of his own youthful ambition. The term *shusetsu* (守拙) “unskilful” first appeared in Tao Yuan-ming’s line ‘return to nature in order to keep an unskillful life style (守拙歸園田)’<sup>144</sup>

無題 [其五]

破碎空中百尺樓      巨濤却向月宮流

大漁不語沒波底      俊鶻將飛立岸頭

劍上風鳴多殺氣      枕邊雨滴鎖閑愁

一任文字買奇禍      笑指青山入予洲<sup>145</sup>

Untitled

Having smashed the tall castle in the air

A great wave has changed direction towards the moon palace.

<sup>144</sup> Sako Junichirō, *Sōseki Shishū Zenshaku*, p. 74

<sup>145</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol 18 p.182

A big fish silently disappears down to the bottom of the waves,  
A strong falcon sits on top of a cliff, ready to fly towards its prey.  
The sound of wind blowing over the sword is ferociously bloodthirsty,  
The sound of raindrops by the pillows washes away random sadness.  
Leaving behind all the troubles of the literary world,  
I smile and enter into Yoshu pointing at the blue mountain.

This poem expresses Sōseki's feelings when he moved to Matsuyama. He withdrew from the world like a big fish disappearing after his moment of enlightenment or, on the other hand, like a falcon waiting for the chance to grab his prey, exhibiting the contradiction in his emotions: he is looking for *fūryū*, but at the same time retaining his ambition, waiting for the right moment. Events in the real world are fierce and blood-thirsty, yet the sound of raindrops washes away his melancholy, random sadness.

Komiya Toyotaka analysed Sōseki's psychological condition at that time:

It was obvious to everyone that Sōseki made up his mind to give up illusions about himself, and while persuading himself that he was good for nothing, wanted to live as himself. However, it is clear that his anger about the everyday world, which he is supposed to have overcome, is still there. Obviously Sōseki went to Matsuyama with the intention of giving up everything; nevertheless this did not happen.<sup>146</sup>

While Shiki was in the Kōbe hospital, Sōseki was also suffering from a mild case of tuberculosis. As well, Sōseki suffered from trachoma and depression. The following poem is an expression of Sōseki's attitude towards his illness:

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<sup>146</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 209

無題 [其 四]

驚才恰好臥山隈      夙把功名投火灰  
心似鉄牛鞭不動      憂如梅雨去還來  
青天獨解詩人憤      白眼空招俗似哈  
日暮蚊軍將滿室      起揮丸扇對催嵬<sup>147</sup>

Untitled

A foolish person like me is better off living in the mountains.  
The desire for fame has already burnt to ash,  
I am no longer distracted by small affairs.  
Still my heart is gloomy like the rainy season.  
Only the blue sky will understand the poet's anger.  
The world is laughing at me.  
Here, away from the world, there will be many mosquitoes at sunset.  
I will wave them away with a fan.

Sōseki uses the symptom of his illness as a metaphor for his mental state. Waving his fan to deal with mosquitos is a metaphor for his dealing with the aggravations caused by the literary world.

It is difficult to find this kind of emotional complexity in Shiki's poetry. Shiki wrote about the meaninglessness of worldly fame, and about quiet living in solitude and loneliness. However, Shiki's loneliness came from the reality that he could not achieve fame because of his illness, and he accepted his illness as fate.

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<sup>147</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 18 p. 180

Shiki wrote: 与天同所赴 万物総悠哉<sup>148</sup> (proceed to the place where heaven wants you to go, and every being in the world will become relaxed.) Shiki's renunciation calmed him and so his poetry did not contain the inner, existential anguish of Sōseki's. Even his nationalistic poems were more about hostility and resentment against foreign oppression rather than about identity crises and inner spiritual struggles. Shiki's tuberculosis was fairly advanced, so he wrote many poems about the pain of illness:

閉戸三旬久	拋書獨嘆嗟
擁衾聽夜雨	杖劍見梅花
藥餌醫方巧	腰肢病勢加
晏然俟天命	春月上窓紗 <sup>149</sup>

Illness, 1896

For nearly one month I stayed at home.  
 I could not even read books but lamented alone.  
 Listening to the sound of rain at night wrapped in a night gown  
 Gazing at plum blossom, leaning on a walking stick.  
 Even with the help of a good doctor,  
 The pain in the back and legs is worsening.  
 I leave everything to heaven's will  
 And enjoy the spring moonlight faintly coming through the window.

<sup>148</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.210

<sup>149</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 205



In this poem Shiki's illness does not act as a metaphor for social or philosophical issues.

He perceives illness as a part of nature.

In August, Shiki recovered and returned to his home town, Matsuyama, to live in the house Sōseki was renting while a teacher at Matsuyama School. Although composing haiku with the other members of his haiku group, *Sōfūkai*, was his main focus, Shiki also wrote the following *kanshi*:

養病在鄉里松山與夏目漱石同寓

書劍風塵跡	尊鱸鄉國心
人煙遶城起	金氣從海侵
素月離山頂	秋風動竹林
不堪共分手	夜靜露華深 <sup>150</sup>

'Staying in home town Matsuyama, sharing a place with Natsume Sōseki.,'

With books and swords, I travelled to a dusty world.

I missed home and came back to Matsuyama.

The town prospered around the castle,

The autumn wind came from the seaside.

The moon rose from the top of the mountain,

The autumn winds shook the bamboo forest.

I liked to share a house with Sōseki, always,

enjoying the quiet night as dew collected.

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<sup>150</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Kaidō no Hana—Shiki Kanshi to Sōseki*, p.182

Finally, Shiki returned to Tokyo, where he wrote the following poem on a visit by

Sōseki:

十二月三十一日夏目漱石來

忙裏年光速                  冬來病勢增

窮陰天欲雪                  寒日道生氷

廬與山相接                  吾將世互憎

柴門聞剝啄                  倒屣迓良朋<sup>151</sup>

'December Thirty-first, Natsume Sōseki Visited'

Time passes quickly with a busy lifestyle.

My illness has been getting worse since winter.

The sky is cloudy as if it will snow soon,

The road is frozen.

My house is just near the mountains.

I and the world do not like each other.

Then, one day, I hear the sound of tapping at the door.

I rushed to the door with my wooden clogs half off,

Welcoming my good friend who has come to visit.

Shiki expressed the joy he felt when Sōseki came to visit him. Shiki was suffering from back pain, made worse by the cold wind, that he developed on the way to Tokyo. In this

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<sup>151</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Kaidō no Hana—Shiki Kanshi to Sōseki*, p.191

poem Shiki depicted the feelings of a patient who was sensitive and hostile towards world symbolised by the gloomy and cruel winter scene.

According to Nakamura Hiroshi, Sōseki's *kanshi* written in Matsuyama and Kumamoto are valued as some of his best, and recognized as mature records of a deep agony about life: "we can say that from 1895 in Matsuyama Sōseki's poems started expressing the worries and values in life in depth and with vivid colours."<sup>152</sup> Sōseki's *kanshi* at this time were highly praised by other *kanshi* specialists and some of them appear in the *Meiji Kanshibunshū*, a collection by Kanda Kiichirō of the most highly regarded poems of the Meiji period.<sup>153</sup>

The following poems appear in the *Meiji Kanshibunshū*. Sōseki later used two of these poems 'Shunkyō' and 'Shunjitsu Seiza' written in 1898 in his novel *Kusamakura*.

'Shunkyō' appears with an introductory paragraph:

Once again I felt the inspiration to write, and lying on the grass, I began to arrange my ideas. I wrote down every line in my sketchbook as it came to me, and eventually when I felt I had done all I could, I read them through from the beginning.<sup>154</sup>

春興]

出門多所思                      春風吹吾衣

芳草生車轍                      癡道入霞微

停筇而屬目                      万象帶晴暉

<sup>152</sup> Nakamura Hiroshi, *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*, p.83

<sup>153</sup> Kanda Kiichirō (ed.), *Meiji Kanshibunshū*, 1983

<sup>154</sup> A.Turney, (trans) *The Three-cornered World*, p.167

聽黃鳥宛轉	賭落英紛霏
行盡平蕪遠	題詩古寺扉
孤愁高雲際	大空斷鴻歸
寸心何窈窕	縹緲忘是非
三十我欲老	韶光猶依依
逍遙隨物化	悠然對芬菲 <sup>155</sup>

My head was crammed with thoughts when I left home,  
 With spring's sweet breath playing around my skirts.  
 The rutted path is overgrown with fragrance,  
 And passes neglected into hazed obscurity.  
 Leaning upon my staff, I view each detail  
 Of bright Nature in her shining mantle.  
 A crystal cascade of nightingale's notes falls on the ear,  
 While air is filled with sweetest floral rain.  
 Beyond a wide and desolate plain I reach  
 An ancient temple, on whose door a poem I inscribe.  
 In uncompanied loneliness I look towards the clouds  
 Where one wild goose, unskeined, wings homeward 'cross the sky.  
 How deep, how recondite this seeming petty heart,  
 In whose recesses right and wrong lie dimmed by distance.  
 Although yet thirty, my thoughts are those of age,  
 But spring retains her former glory.

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<sup>155</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, Vol.18, p.194

Wandering here and there I am as one with everything in turn,

And ‘midst the perfumed blossoms, peace is mine.’<sup>156</sup>

‘Done it! I’ve done it!’ The words escaped from me with contented sigh. This is what I had been waiting to write. These lines exactly expressed my oblivion to the world while I had been lying gazing at the quince blossoms. It did not matter that there was no mention of the blossoms themselves, or of the sea: it was enough that the poem expressed what I felt.”<sup>157</sup>

This segment illustrates Sōseki’s views about how poetry should be written: like a sketch, yet not of the real objects but of the objects in poet’s mind and inner vision.

Another poem ‘Shunjitsuseiza’ (I sit down quietly one spring day)<sup>158</sup> appears in *Kusamakura* under the introductory passage:

“My pencil moved fitfully on the page, but by persevering I succeeded in producing the following lines in about thirty minutes.”<sup>159</sup>

春日靜坐]

青春二三月	愁隨芳草長
閑花落空庭	素琴橫虛堂
蟪蛄挂不動	篆烟燒竹梁 <sup>160</sup>

The months of spring are short as fleeting youth

Yet sadness like the stems of fragrant plants is long.

<sup>156</sup> A.Turney (trans.), *Three-cornered World*, p.167

<sup>157</sup> Natsume Sōseki, trans. A.Turney, *The Three-cornered World*, p.167

<sup>158</sup> A.Turney (trans.), *The Three-cornered World*, p.94

<sup>159</sup> A.Turney (trans.), *The Three-cornered World*, p.94

<sup>160</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 18 p.201

Petals fall silently to earth in an empty garden,

And in the deserted hall a simple harp lies silent.

Immobile in his web the spider hangs

As fingers of smoke trace round the bamboo beams.

On reading them through I had the impression that any one of these lines could have been turned into a picture. Why, I wondered, was it easier to write poetry than to paint. I thought that perhaps I should not have abandoned my attempt at painting, when with a little more effort, I might have been successful. However, I had a desire to put into words a sentiment that could not be expressed on canvas. Once again I racked my brains, and eventually wrote:<sup>161</sup>

独坐無隻語          方寸認微光

人間徒多事          此境孰可忘

会得一日靜          正知百年忙

遐懷寄何処          緬邈白雲鄉<sup>162</sup>

Seated alone in silence undisturbed,

Within my heart a shaded light I see.

How futile the activity of man.

Oh, can I e'er forget this state

Where for one day tranquillity I find

And see how busy were the ages past for me?

Where can I lay this yearning soul to rest?

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<sup>161</sup> A.Turney (trans.), *The Three-cornered World*, p. 94

<sup>162</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 18 p.201

Far, far away among the milk-white clouds.”<sup>163</sup>

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This poem contains the Taoist view that meditation in remote nature, which is expressed here as ‘white cloud country’, brings inner peace and the Buddhist view that enlightenment makes one understand the futility of the bustle of human life. The poem is not about Sōseki’s personal problems, but about enlightenment and wisdom as a human being. Nagao Ameyama, a *kanshi* poet and friend of Sōseki’s, who corrected some of Sōseki’s poems on Sōseki’s request, comments: “The poem exhibits a calm and deep intelligence, an abundant flavour, a pleasure of selecting words, which shows the poet’s true achievement. Especially the phrase, ‘Where for one day tranquillity... see how busy were the ages past for me?’ is commendable as most refined and well written.”<sup>164</sup>

Sōseki quotes Wang Wei’s poem in *Kusamakura*:

独坐幽篁裏  
彈琴復長嘯  
深林人不知  
明月來相照<sup>165</sup>

Seated alone, cloistered amidst bamboo

I pluck the strings;

And from my harp

The lingering notes follow leisurely away.

Into the dim and unfrequented depths

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<sup>163</sup> A. Turney (trans.), *The Three-cornered World*, p. 94

<sup>164</sup> Quoted by Ikkai Tomoyoshi in his commentary in *Sōseki Zenshū*, Vol. 18, p.204

<sup>165</sup> *Natsume Sōsekishū, Nihon Bungaku Zenshū*, vol.13, p.351

Comes bright moonlight filtering through the leaves.<sup>166</sup>

The T'ang poet, Wang Wei, was also famous as an artist. In *Kusamakura*, the artist protagonist claims that the world of Wang Wei and Tao Yuan-ming's can inspire an artist:

I am not really a poet by profession, so it is not my intention to preach to modern society, in the hope of obtaining converts to the kind of life led by Wang Wei and Tao Yuan-ming. Suffice it to say that, in my opinion, the inspiration to be gained from their works is a far more effective antidote to the hustle and bustle of modern living than theatricals and dance-parties. Moreover, this type of poetry appears to me to be more palatable than *Faust* or *Hamlet*. This is the sole reason why in spring I trudge all alone along mountain tracks with my colour-box and tripod slung from my shoulder. I long to absorb straight from Nature some of the atmosphere of Yuan-ming's and Wang Wei's world; and, if only a brief period, wander at will through a land which is completely detached from feelings and emotions. This is a peculiarity of mine.<sup>167</sup>

In *Kusamakura*, Sōseki discusses the differences between poetry and painting. He thinks that an emotion can be expressed in a poem but not in a painting, giving 'Shunjitsuseiza' as an example. At the same time, Sōseki emphasizes the importance for both artists and poets of being in nature, of quietly meditating and absorbing the atmosphere of nature. He recommends Wang Wei and Tao Yuan-ming's world of poetry as an antidote for the busy modern world.

Another poem written about the same time is 'Saika Kō (Rape blossoms)':

菜花黄 (明治三十一年三月)

菜花黄朝暾

菜花黄夕陽

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<sup>166</sup> A. Turney (trans.), *The Three-cornered World*, p. 20

<sup>167</sup> A. Turney (trans.), *The Three-cornered World*, p. 21



菜花黃裏人	晨昏喜欲狂
曠懷隨雲雀	沖融入彼蒼
縹緲近天都	迢遞凌塵鄉
其心不可道	厥樂自潢洋
恨未化為鳥	啼盡菜花黃 <sup>168</sup> .

Yellow Rape-blossoms

Rape-blossoms yellow at sunrise,

Rape-blossoms yellow at sunset.

Rape-blossoms among people, everything is yellow.

Ecstasy of joy all day long.

A skylark moves freely and easily,

Into the sky filled with calm tranquillity.

Buoyantly floats almost up to heaven,

Rising high to keep off the dust from mundane world.

How can I express this feeling?

The pleasure is endless

Regrets and grudges now become a bird

That sings high above the yellow blossoms.

Matsuoka Yūzuru noted this poem's unusually bold and daring in expression for a *kanshi*. It is influenced by English poetry, particularly Wordsworth's *Daffodils*, and is

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<sup>168</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18, p. 205

original and highly creative. <sup>169</sup> Sōseki used the atmosphere of this poem in *Kusamakura* as the locus of the poet's creativity. As a poet gazes on the rape-blossoms and hears the lark, leaving behind the business of mundane world, he understands the meaning of the world and himself.

Another example of Sōseki's poem in *Meiji Kanshibunshū* is:

客中逢春寄子規	
春風遍東臯	門前碧燕新
我懷在君子	君子隔嶙峋
嶙峋不可跋	君子空穆忝
悵望不可就	碧燕徒傷神
憶昔交遊日	共許管鮑貧
斗酒凌乾坤	豪氣逼星辰
而今天一涯	索居負我真
客土我問礼	旧廬君賦春
二百余里別	三十一年塵
塵纓無由濯	徘徊滄浪津
寄語子規子	莫為官遊人 <sup>170</sup>

'Sent to Shiki in Spring while Visiting Far Away' (1899 Kumamoto).

As the spring wind blows from eastern hill,

The grass in front of the door is greening again.

<sup>169</sup> quoted by Ikka Tomoyoshi in his commentary, *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.18, p.207

<sup>170</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 18, p.207

I miss the fine gentleman,  
The gentleman who lives many high mountains away,  
In a place I cannot reach.  
The gentleman must be devoting himself to literature with a pure spirit.  
I cannot share, but just watch him.  
The new green grass of the spring steepens me in futile sadness.  
Remembering the olden days when we were friends,  
We were close, merrily sharing our lack.  
We drank plentifully as if possessed by heaven and earth  
Our vigorous spirits drew near to the starry sky.  
Now, I am alone in the world  
Living without friends away from home.  
I am writing to you from a foreign land.  
While you are writing about spring from the old home,  
Two hundred *ri* apart. ,  
With thirty-one years of dust of the mundane world,  
There is no chance of cleansing of such long-standing grime.  
I am only strolling around the bay of clear blue waters.  
Shiki, I urge you  
Never to raise yourself in the world.

Sōseki sent this poem from Kumamoto to Shiki, who was living in Tokyo, to tell him that he should not seek a life in government or fame in the world. The poem reveals the closeness of their friendship.

Four of Shiki's *kanshi* appeared in the *Meiji Kanshibunshū*, with Kanda Kiichirō's introduction:

Shiki was fortunate to have Kokubun Seigai and Honda Shuchiku, well established Meiji *kanshi* poets, as colleagues at the *Nippon Shimbun*. From August to end of the year in 1896, Shiki wrote critiques of *kanshi* in the magazine *Bungaku*. He also engaged in a debate with Mori Kainan over the important disputes about *kanshi* and *kanshi* criticism that occurred from time to time between Seigai, Shuchiku and Kainan.<sup>171</sup>

題山水圖

江山渺渺水悠悠

前岸如煙賣酒樓

不識漁郎何處去

垂楊影裏繫虛舟<sup>172</sup>

A poem on a nature painting

Nature is boundless, water flowing eternally

At the shoreline appears a drinking pavilion dim like smoke.

Unable to find where the fisherman went

An empty boat is fastened to the shadow of a willow branch

Shiki portrayed the image that he can see in the painting realistically, without the subjective expression of emotion, yet the poem leaves a lingering atmosphere, which traditionally, is the most important feature in judging the quality of a *kanshi*.

The following poem was written in 1890 when Shiki stayed in Mii temple for one week.

Usually this style of seven character rissi is written with an antithesis in lines five and

<sup>171</sup> Kanda Kiichirō (ed.), *Meiji Kanshibunshū*, p.432

<sup>172</sup> Kanda Kiichirō (ed.), *Meiji Kanshibunshū*, p.199

six, but Shiki creates contrasts in lines three and four as well, which earned the poem praise for its skilful selection of Chinese characters:

三井寺僑居

幾度夢魂此處飛	僑居十日鎖柴扉
重重青嶂來濃越	漠漠白雲鄰甸畿
驟雨欄前雙燕舞	斷虹湖角一帆歸
山僧薄暮鳴鐘去	渡水餘音聞漸微 <sup>173</sup>

Sojourn at Mii Temple (1890)

How many times have dreams brought me winging to this site?  
Ten days' borrowed lodging, brushwood gate closed.  
Green peaks, tier on tier, come down from north and east,  
Endless expanse of white cloud bordering the capital region.  
Sudden shower beyond the riling, a pair of swallows dart by;  
In corner of the lake broken rainbows, a solitary sail returning.  
The mountain monk at twilight has tolled the bell and gone off--  
Echoes linger over the water, fainter and fainter to the ear.<sup>174</sup>

Iida commented that the following poem was Shiki's emotional parting speech as if sending soldier to war.<sup>175</sup>

<sup>173</sup> Kanda Kiichirō (ed.), *Meiji Kanshibunshū*, p.199

<sup>174</sup> Burton Watson (trans.), *Masaoka Shiki, Selected Poems*, p.113

<sup>175</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Shiki Kanshi to Sōseki*, p. 197

送夏目漱石之伊豫

去矣三千里            送君生暮寒

空中懸大嶽            海末起長瀾

僻地交遊少            狡兒教化難

清明期再會            莫後晚花殘<sup>176</sup>

Sent off Natsume Sōseki going to Iyo

Well, go! three thousands *li*, far away.

When I sent you off, the evening chill cut the skin

You can see the top of Mt Fuji, high in the sky,

You can see the big waves rising from the sea.

Few friends can be found at your new place of appointment.

Crafty children are difficult to educate.

Let's meet again in April,

While late cherry blossoms are still blooming.

Another poem included in the *Meiji Kanshibunshū* is Shiki's 'Morning in Spring':

春晨

春晨清如濯            晴日照自東

爨炊煙細細            出窗散微風

黃鳥鳴古木            飛入荊棘叢

淡雲翳殘月            影落空庭中

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<sup>176</sup> Kanda Kiichirō (ed.), *Meiji Kanshibunshū*, p. 200

萬物得自然            吾生明日終  
苟不爲利縛            便能與天通  
在世豈不勤            讀書味無窮<sup>177</sup>

Morning in Spring)

Morning in spring is clear as if just washed  
The day brightening in the east.  
Mountain mists are thinning  
And a gentle breeze comes through the window.  
Yellow birds singing on ancient trees  
Fly into the thorny grass.  
Thin clouds cover a fading moon,  
Its shadow falling on an empty garden.  
Everything comes from nature.  
We are born to die tomorrow  
At least we do not struggle for personal advantage,  
But try to communicate with the will of heaven.  
Not working for the present world, in contrast  
The pleasure of reading is endless.

Shiki's positive character shines through this poem as he celebrates human efforts to follow the will of heaven, even though we are doomed to die.

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<sup>177</sup> Kanda Kiichirō (ed.), *Meiji Kanshibunshū*, p. 200

The poem below is the last poem that Sōseki wrote in his early period just before leaving for England.

[無題] 明治三十三年

君病風流謝俗紛	吾愚牢落失鴻群
磨甗未徹古人句	嘔血始看才子文
陌柳映衣征意動	館燈照鬢客愁分
詩成投筆蹣跚起	此去西天多白雲 <sup>178</sup>

'No title, 1900'

Shiki, you withdrew from worldly matters because you were ill.  
I am about to leave my friends to go overseas alone.  
I still cannot understand the old saying 'polishing a tile to be a mirror.'  
You are spitting blood but producing wonderful literary works.  
The reflection of willow trees on the street moved my heart to travel,  
Lamplight from a lodge made travellers melancholy.  
Since my poem is ready, I will get up and prepare  
To go to the west with full of white clouds of hope,  
leaving everything behind.

Wada Toshio notes that Sōseki thought that Shiki might not survive until Sōseki came back to Japan. This poem was written to comfort Shiki, and ended up being the last poem that Sōseki sent to his beloved friend.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Sōseki Zenshū, vol.18, p.231



## 2-2. Features of Sōseki's early *kanshi*

### Themes: Questions of Existence and Insecurity

Sōseki wrote *kanshi* in order to find some inner peace through the meditative act that writing poetry of this type involves, particularly if going out into the mountains and immersing oneself in nature is part of the process. As is well known, Sōseki found the everyday world of working as a teacher very stressful for a wide range of reasons. However, he was able to express very effectively his insecurity and anxiety in his *kanshi*.

The first *kanshi* Sōseki ever wrote, at sixteen years of age, was a seven character quatrain under the title 'Kodai', in 1883, about his visit to a temple in Kōnodai (Ichikawa city in Chiba prefecture). It was later published in the magazine *Jiun* in 1906.

鴻台冒曉訪禪扉	孤磬沈沈斷続微
一叩一推人不答	驚鴉撩亂掠門飛。 <sup>180</sup>

Taking the risk of getting caught by the dark, I visited a Zen temple.

Only the sound of the bell struck by a monk echoed faintly  
in the deeply quiet place.

I knocked once and called for someone again and again,  
but could not get an answer.

Only a startled crow flew out from behind the door

The poem has the atmosphere of a set from a modern drama. A lonely man is knocking at the door in front of a Buddhist temple. The day is getting dark and there is no answer.

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<sup>179</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 256

<sup>180</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.192

As time goes by, the man becomes anxious and uncertain. The sound of a startled crow flying out from behind the door breaks the silence and even drowns out the only other faint sound, the echo of a monk's bell. It drives the reader into an even deeper feeling of loneliness and desertion.

Inoue Hisashi said of this poem, "I would like to point out the atmosphere of this poem. Someone visited a certain place, and a certain person. However, the person was not there. The visitor remained outside filled with uncertainty and anxiety. This scene, this tone of insecurity often appears in Sōseki's *kanshi*." <sup>181</sup>

Many scholars who have studied Soseki argue that his insecurity originated from his childhood experiences. Sōseki was adopted and raised by foster parents until the age of ten, only coming back to his original Natsume family because of the foster parents' divorce. Watanabe Shōichi discusses the existential questions that Sōseki's foster parents often asked Sōseki: 'Who is your father?' 'Then, who is your mother?' 'Then who is your real parents?' 'Where were you born?' Watanabe points out:

For an ordinary child, those kinds of questions would have been at most not answered or distorted. However, this child was one of the most intelligent in modern Japan, and the questions were taken as more fundamental questions of human existence. <sup>182</sup>

According to Jin Myung-Soon <sup>183</sup> this scene represents Sōseki knocking at the door of his life. Even at this early age, his interest in Zen was evident, and this *kanshi* was later

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<sup>181</sup> Quoted in Sako Junichirō, *Sōseki Shishū Zenshaku*, p. 20

<sup>182</sup> Watanabe Shōichi, '*Sōseki to Kanshi*', p.4

<sup>183</sup> Jin Myung-Soon, *Natsume Sōseki Moon Hack Yeon Koo*, 2001.

developed as the motif of his novel *Mon*, in which the protagonist Sosuke visits a Zen temple, but finds he cannot achieve the peace of mind he seeks:

He had come here to have the gate opened to him, but its warden had remained obstinately within, and had not so much as shown his face, however long he knocked. The only greeting he had received was, “It’s no use knocking. Open the gate yourself and enter.”<sup>184</sup>

This early poem seems to augur Sōseki’s life-long failure at freeing himself from anxiety and depression, expressed so vividly in *Mon*:

It seemed to him that he had been fated from birth to stand forever outside the gate, unable to pass through. There was nothing he could do about it. But if the gate were really impassable, then it had been a contradiction to come here in the first place. He looked behind him and he lacked the courage to retrace his steps along the road he had come. He looked ahead at the firmly-bolted door that would never open to reveal the view beyond. He was not a man, then, to pass through, nor was he yet one who could be content to remain on the outside.<sup>185</sup>

### **Motivations: *kanshū* (random sadness) and *fūryū***

Sōseki wrote *kanshi* in order to try to free himself *kanshū* (閑愁) random sadness. When Sōseki felt this anxiety without any specific reason or when he was in a lonely, melancholic mood, he longed for *fūryū*, the quiet, relaxing yet contemplative life style. *Kanshū* appears in poems not only about his melancholy in the stressful urban life of Tokyo, but also about his lonely disappointment of life in Matsuyama. *Kanshū* therefore refers to Sōseki’s underlying emotional and mental make-up, rather than to any

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<sup>184</sup> Francis Mathy (trans.), *Mon*, p.204

<sup>185</sup> Francis Mathy (trans.), *Mon*, p.204-205

particular circumstance. Saito Junji notes that Sōseki often uses *kanshū* in his poems attached to his *nanga* paintings: the use of this word indicates his longing for *fūryū*.<sup>186</sup>

Sōseki expresses also his feeling of sadness using the word *anshū* (暗愁) a shadow of sadness, several times in his *kanshi*. In his *kanshi* ‘Sending Off a Friend and Returning to Hakone’, the melancholy does not arise from the parting. Rather, Sōseki felt that his melancholy lifted after the farewell, the lingering sadness referring to the time he had spent with his friend in Tokyo. *Anshū* also appears in one of Sōseki’s three poems without titles that were written upon receiving the scholarship to England. He wrote that he would like to get rid of *anshū* by crossing the ocean between Japan and far-away England. Saitō Junji identified the sadness of *anshū* in these poems as reflecting the uncertainty and anticipation of the overseas study ahead of him, not referring to the chronic anxiety stemming from his problematic childhood.<sup>187</sup> His wife’s attempted suicide and his suffering as an English teacher can also be seen as the causes of *anshū*.

*Kanshū* thus refers to Sōseki’s chronic psychological condition of deep anxiety and depression, stemming from his childhood experiences, and driving him in search of *fūryū*, while *anshū* can be seen as the pain or sorrow he experiences at specific events of his life, which, at this time, made him feel that the trip to England would heal.

### **Sōseki’s Ideal Place: white cloud country as Utopia or *Tōgenkyō***

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<sup>186</sup> Saito Junji, *Natsume Sōseki Kanshiko*, p.31

<sup>187</sup> Saito Junji, *Natsume Sōseki Kanshiko*, p.34

Sōseki used ‘white cloud’ (白雲) or ‘white cloud country’ (白雲郷) many times in his *kanshi*. Watanabe Shōichi pointed out that Sōseki’s early use of ‘white cloud’ never referred to the weather, but was always a symbol of an imaginary land both in a Zen Buddhist and a Taoist sense. The ‘white cloud country’ is the world of *nanga*, Nirvana, a world lying at the other side of Spencer’s theory of evolution. It is a world which allows people to be foolish, unskilful, non-competitive, as opposed to the fiercely competitive world of winners and losers of modern civilization.<sup>188</sup>

Shuku Shine<sup>189</sup> noted that according to Watanabe Shōichi’s statistics, Sōseki used the phrase ‘white cloud’ eighteen times in his *kanshi*, commenting that Sōseki used this expression generally as a metaphor for “a happy place in nature” but with subtle variations of connotation.

In her discussion of the issue as to whether ‘white cloud country’ is closer to the concept of *tōgenkyō*, an ideal place in Eastern thought, or ‘utopia’ in Western thought she pointed out that while *tōgenkyō* and ‘utopia’ both refer to ideal places or situation, far from real world, there are important differences in these concepts. “Utopia” refers to a world that does not exist in this present world but may come into being in the future, somewhere, whereas *tōgenkyō* comes from the Chinese notion of the distant past as a place where people lived together happily in beautiful nature among peach blossoms, writing poetry, painting pictures, having given up warfare. Therefore, utopia is built on aspirations for the future while *tōgenkyō* is based on nostalgia for the past.

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<sup>188</sup> Watanabe Shōichi, *Sōseki to Kanshi*, p.29

<sup>189</sup> Shuku Shine, ‘Natsume Sōseki no *kanshi*’ *Kokubungaku Kaishaku to Kansho*, p.31

<sup>191</sup> Shuku Shine, ‘Natsume Sōsekino *kanshi*’ p.32-33

So, ‘white cloud’ in ‘Kansanzatsuei V’ refers to *tōgenkyō*, the Eastern concept of paradise<sup>191</sup>, and in the poem ‘Shunjitsuseiza’, the place where the soul can rest after enlightenment. Meanwhile, ‘white cloud’ in the poem written at the time of departure for England is used as a metaphor for a place full of hope, an optimistic place, a ‘utopia’.<sup>192</sup>

### “Unskillful Stubbornness”

‘Maintaining unskillfulness (守拙)’ is a phrase used by Sōseki to refer to his wish to keep to his own ways, without following the trends of society. He put his uneasiness about accepting the fast-changing civilization into one word, ‘unskillfulness (拙)’. Sako Junichirō quoted Sōseki’s letter to Shiki, in which he asserted that whenever he was accused of bad behaviour because of maintaining unskillfulness or keeping stubbornness, on the contrary, he felt good.<sup>195</sup>

Wada Toshio pointed out that “unskillfulness (拙) was one of Sōseki’s important values in life and standards in measuring artistic quality.”<sup>196</sup> In his essay ‘Amateurs and Professionals’ Sōseki states:

Ryokan describes ‘a poem written by a poet and a painting drawn by a professional artist’ as things that he does not like. As a matter of fact, the work of professionals displays a good standard. The reason Ryokan disparages

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<sup>192</sup> Watanabe Shōichi, *Sōseki to Kanshi*, p. 34

<sup>195</sup> Sako Junichirō, *Sōseki Shishū Zenshaku*, p.75

<sup>196</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōsekino Shi to Haiku* p.214

‘professionals’ work’ is that he values more the genuine, pure and naive attitude of an amateur.<sup>197</sup>

As early as 1890, at the age of twenty three, Sōseki’s poetry prophesises that his “stubborn unskilfulness” ie his unwillingness and incapacity to conform to the world, was a kind of illness, which, unlike Shiki’s tuberculosis, was incurable. On the other hand, many of his poems indirectly justify this mental state by referring to the futility and uncleanness of worldly success.

### Writing Styles: Colour Words and Personification

The most striking characteristics of Sōseki’s *kanshi* writing style were his use of personification and colour words, seen as the result of his English literature training. Wada Toshio lists the eighteen colours that appeared two hundred and fourteen times in Sōseki’s *kanshi* as: white(白), off-white(素), blue (青), jade green (翠), light blue-green(蒼), deep blue-green (碧), leaf-green (緑), purple(紫), light red (紅), orange (朱), red (丹), deep red (赤), yellow(黄), black (黒), “dark” black(玄), gold(金), and silver (銀).<sup>200</sup> Sōseki used colour words at an even higher rate than Wang Wei, the artist-poet. Wada further calculates that white appears forty-five times, blue thirty-two times, yellow twenty-seven times, blue green twenty-five times, light red twenty-two times and leaf green fifteen times. Chinese poets such as Wang Wei, Li Po and Tu Fu *kanshi* used white and blue most frequently. However, Sōseki’s third most common

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<sup>197</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.215

<sup>200</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.166

colour, yellow, is unique.<sup>201</sup> The most famous example being 菜花黄. Wada further noted that Sōseki's *risshi* often made use of colour words in parallel--for example, white and blue(白-青); red and blue-green(紅-碧), white and red (白-紅), yellow and white(黄-白), and yellow and blue-green (黄-碧).<sup>202</sup>

As we have seen earlier, Sōseki personifies nature frequently with the words 'hit' 'blow' 'angry', 'scratch', or 'jump up' in his *kanshi*. These types of terms were not usually used in Chinese literary expression.

### 2-3 Overview of Shiki's *kanshi*

Shiki started his literary activities by writing *kanshi*, well before he started to write haiku. Shiki commented in 'Dassai Shooku Haikuchō Shō',

Writing five- and seven- word quatrains by arranging the Chinese rhyme *hyōsoku* was taught to me when I was reading Japanese History. I later wrote Japanese poems (*tanka*) even though they were not perfect in grammar and had to be corrected by a teacher, but I had never read or written haiku at that time.<sup>203</sup>

Composing *kanshi* was an element of a Confucian education, designed to cultivate a virtue in a Confucian gentleman's mind. Shiki continued to write *kanshi* until he was too ill and weak to write in such a complicated genre.

Wada Toshio divided Shiki's *kanshi* into three chronological categories,<sup>204</sup> a classification which Shuku Shine followed.<sup>205</sup> The first period was from 1878 to 1883 in Matsuyama, when Shiki was practicing *kanshi* on the titles in a *kanshi* text-book; the

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<sup>201</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.167

<sup>202</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.172

<sup>203</sup> Masaoka Shiki, *Masaoka Shiki Shū*, p. 285

<sup>204</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 194

<sup>205</sup> Shuku Shine, 'Shiki no *kanshi*', p. 124



second period spanned 1883 to 1892, in Tokyo, when Shiki was working for the *Nihon Shimbun* and the third period spanned 1893 to 1896, when Shiki was writing as if fighting for life, until mental and physical weakness left him unable to write *kanshi*. He wrote his last poem six years before he died.

### Shiki's First period *kanshi* (1878-1883)

**As practice, conscientiously following the rules of traditional *kanshi* writing:**

In early and mid-Meiji, the intelligentsia composed *kanshi* as a group activity among friends and acquaintances, enthusiastically exchanging poems and critiques. According to Shimizu Fusao<sup>206</sup>, Shiki was devoted in practicing *kanshi* writing, following the guidance of *Yogaku Henran* (*Beginners Examples*).

In his *Fude Makase* (1884-6) Shiki wrote:

I was interested in poetry ever since I was eight or nine years old, when I first started to visit my maternal grandfather Ohara Kanzan. Later I went to Tsuchiya Hisaharu carrying with me *Yogaku henran* (*Beginner's Examples*) and began to learn how to arrange the 'hyōsoku' rhyme of Chinese poetry. In 1878, I had to write one five-character Chinese quatrain every day and show it to Tsuchiya Hisaharu. In spring 1880, I formed a poetry recital group ... We had a meeting every Friday, and showed the poems to our teacher Kawahigashi Seikei. The group continued to meet until 1882.<sup>207</sup>

Shiki's first poem, at eleven years old, was a five-character quatrain.

聞子規

一聲孤月下

啼血不堪聞

<sup>206</sup> Shimizu Fusao, 'Kanshi Bunkaken ni okeru Ichi' p.74

<sup>207</sup> Quoted in Shimizu Fusao, 'Kanshi Bunkaken ni okeru Ichi' p. 74

半夜空欹枕            古鄉萬里雲<sup>208</sup>

Listening to a Cuckoo

A sound under the lonely moon,

I cannot bear listening to the blood-spitting sound,

Staying awake all night leaning on a pillow.

Clouds far away from home.

Shuku Shine noted that Shiki selected this poem and presented it as his first poem written entirely by himself. It was a practice piece following the rule of *kanshi* rhyme; however, without mentioning ‘cuckoo’, this *kanshi* conveys realistically its sad cry.<sup>210</sup> Shiki wrote many poems about the scenery of his hometown, objectively portraying as it was and conscientiously following rhyme rules.

As a school student in Matsuyama Shiki formed a group of friends who liked to write *kanshi*, creating little magazines such as *Five Friends Magazine* and *Intimate Poem* that contained their *kanshi* and critiques of each others’ work. Later, in 1884, Shiki discussed his approach to *kanshi* in *Fudemakase*:

In Chinese writing, unlike any other country’s literary works, one should struggle for mastery not only in taste or flair but also in composition of characters in phrases... when I write a poem, I usually don’t think about the taste from the beginning, but think first about the composition of the phrases, then consider the emotion the poem brings.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Collected in *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.18 p. 97

<sup>210</sup> Shuku Shine, ‘Shiki no *kanshi*’ p. 124

<sup>212</sup> Quoted in Iida Rigyō, *Kaidō no Hana—Shiki Kanshi to Sōseki*, p.38

Iida Rigyō summarises Shiki's view on the merits of composing *kanshi*, quoting Shiki:

Rhyme beautifies expression through the refinement of thought and usage of words, even though it restricts poets in their selection of characters and content.

It forces poets to avoid the use of unnecessary modifiers and to consider meaning carefully. It also brings diversity to the imagination, which produces immeasurable depth and variety of connotations.<sup>214</sup>

Shiki further argues that the strictness of rhyme rules stimulates the creativity of both the poet and the reader into a world of boundless dreams. One of the pleasures of creating *kanshi* is that a modern person can travel back into the past or forwards to the future.<sup>215</sup>

### Some innovative ideas and unusual subjects for *kanshi*

Shiki also wrote some unique poems with an individualistic approach on unusual topics.

One early poem that shows his originality:

風船

風裡縱橫上碧空      多年苦慮奪天工  
不須鶴背仙人術      千水萬山指點中<sup>216</sup>

Balloon (1880).

The balloon moves freely, high in the sky,  
the result of years of long, hard work by scientists.

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<sup>214</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Kaidō no Hana—Shiki Kanshi to Sōseki*, p.39

<sup>215</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Kaidō no Hana—Shiki Kanshi to Sōseki*, p.41

<sup>216</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 195

<sup>218</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.196

We need not depend on the crane to fly,  
 Since we can see all the rivers and mountains at one glance from the balloon.  
 Shiki attraction to the west and to newly imported inventions is evident in this poem.  
 He valued modern science and believed that new inventions can open up new visions.

### Dualities and controversial aspects as values in life

冬日食蟹

霜天江蟹美

香味解心憂

翻感西洋子

橫行遍五州<sup>218</sup>

Eating Crab on a Winter Day. (1881)

Crab in winter is so delicious,

The taste wipes away one's worries.

These thoughts bring me to the bitter realisation

That western culture has prevailed all over the world.

The horizontal English script is just like the sideways moving crab, and even though fascinated by cultural imports from the west, as a man educated in the Confucian classics, Shiki found the spread of western culture threatening and disorderly. Wada Toshio notes the maturity and creativity of the fifteen year-old Shiki's efforts at finding ways of writing beyond the old usages.<sup>220</sup>

Janine Beichman argues that the paradox in Shiki's thought was caused by the conflict between foreign and native culture and that his ability to hold a balance in these

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<sup>220</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.196

contradictory elements was notable. Shiki tended to perceive the world itself as a series of dualities; therefore, his writings contain two different aspects, such as realism and fantasy, or objective description and subjective expression. This contradictory element in Shiki's character may have stemmed from his upbringing. Born into a samurai family in Matsuyama, but losing his father at five years old, Shiki was brought up by his maternal grandfather, Ohara Kanzan, who was a Confucian scholar. Even though he attended a public school, his real education came through learning classical Chinese history, literature and philosophy with private tutors and his grandfather Kanzan, who was opposed to the new world of the Meiji period.<sup>221</sup>

Shiki's contradictory character exhibited itself when he was involved in the movement for the revival of popular rights in Matsuyama in 1882. Shiki enthusiastically attended political meetings and rallies but when the headmaster tried to suppress the radical movement and banned Shiki from public speaking, Shiki would have chosen either to become a political martyr or, totally differently, to disappear to the mountains and to write poetry.

### **Poems about historical events and hero worship**

Another important characteristic of Shiki's early poetry was that he wrote many poems about people and events in Japanese history, Chinese history, and even American history, reflecting his interest in history and his tendency towards hero-worship as Wada Toshio noted.<sup>222</sup> Shuku Shine also refers to Shiki's interest in social issues, such as

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<sup>221</sup> Janine Beichman, *Masaoka Shiki*, p.2- 3

<sup>222</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 194

women's education and its link to being a good mother, using Chinese old saying of 'Mengzi's' mother in one of his poems.<sup>223</sup>

In stark contrast, Sōseki did not write a single poem about history or about specific social issues.

## Second period (1883-1892)

### Detailed observation of places and the sketch method

In this period, Shiki was still in good health, so he wrote many poems about travelling to various places. These are considered the best of Shiki's *kanshi* and are known for their realistic expressions and detailed observations. He wrote mostly seven-character *zekku* (quatrains), seven-character old poems, and seven-character *risshi* on various titles. During this period, Shiki's life went through many changes: he entered Tokyo University, met Kuga Katsunan<sup>224</sup> and Natsume Sōseki, left the university, and started the haiku reform movement. These life changes stimulated his *kanshi* composition, and he produced about three hundred and fifty during this period.

He wrote the column 'Dassaishōku Haiwa' (Talks on Haiku from the Otter's Den) for the *Nippon Shimbun* in 1892, and later worked for the newspaper as a haiku editor. It was at this time that, after his fateful meeting with the Western-style painter, Nakamura Fusetsu he began to apply the concept of *shasei* to *kanshi* and haiku writing, as Burton Watson noted:

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<sup>223</sup> Shuku Shine, 'Shiki no *kanshi*,' p.126

<sup>224</sup> Kuga Katsunan (1857-1907), founder and editor of *Nihon Newspaper* and a noted champion of liberal-democratic ideology

The writer was to carry out minute observation of the scenes around him and to compose works based on what he saw there, conjuring up the mood or emotional tenor he desired through apt manipulation of images found in real life.<sup>225</sup>

This period, is marked by the friendships which were most important in shaping Shiki's future thought and creativity.

### **Third period: (1893-1897)**

#### **Patriotism and the places he saw during the war**

The Sino-Japanese war broke out in July 1894, and Shiki was eager to participate, despite his tuberculosis. His participation in war, his haiku reformation and the content of both his haiku and *kanshi* writing reveal Shiki's deep concern about the Japanese identity and nationalism. Kuga Katsunan identified the nature of nationalism as it applied to Japan at the time, according to Oketani Hideaki:

Kuga Katsunan's emphasis on nationalism was about the emotional aspect of national consciousness. Kuga Katsunan wrote in his 'An Idea of the World and An Idea of the Nation' that the matters of intelligence belonged to a global ideal whereas the matters of sentiment belonged to a national ideal. He argued that Japanese should maintain political independence and establish a special position in cultural life style as well.<sup>226</sup>

Katsunan labelled Shiki's poetic themes as: 'the promotion of the national ideal in the emotional life of Japanese'.<sup>227</sup>

#### **Illness and devotion to literature**

Shiki wrote extensively about his illness in various forms: *kanshi*, essays, diaries and haiku. His literature became his life, or as Janine Beichman puts it:

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<sup>225</sup> Burton Watson, *Masaoka Shiki: Selected Poems*, p.7

<sup>226</sup> Oketani Hideaki, 'Masaoka Shiki to Kuga Katsunan' *Kokubungaku*, p.88

<sup>227</sup> Oketani Hideaki, 'Masaoka Shiki to Kuga Katsunan' *Kokubungaku*, p.89

Shiki used ‘my literature’ as a synonym for ‘my life’. He had accepted the knowledge that he would die young, but he retained his attachment to life in a sublimated form, as a wish for the survival of his ‘literature’.<sup>228</sup>

Shiki writes under the title ‘Poor Man’s Hut’ (1896)<sup>229</sup> of his difficulties moving around caused by pain and poverty: “High hopes of youth bit by bit ground down, I envy myself the wanderings I once had.” Shiki expresses his feeling towards his writing; “Heedless of Heaven, headless of men, all I do is peck and polish away at my writings, but words differ from east to west and tastes of today belie those of the past. My sentences are as ineffectual as the otter’s sacrifice,<sup>230</sup> my poems as pointless as a winter fan.” Shiki reflects on his own life: “I haven’t two acres of land—couldn’t retire to a life of farming. I have no talent for saving the world—could never put on the official’s cap. ‘Poor means stupid!’ people say—down and out, I wince at their nasty saw.” Shiki expresses his helplessness, as he feels his writings cannot bring any positive result in the literary world. He groans under his feelings of his insufficiency.

## 2-4 Comparison of Sōseki’s and Shiki’s *kanshi*

Wada Toshio noted that, once, before they exchanged their *kanshi*, Shiki and Sōseki both wrote a poem on the same picture. Shiki wrote about the image in a five-character *zekku*.

題畫                  子規

柴門無剝啄                  家鴨伴僮還

<sup>228</sup> Janine Beichman, *Masaoka Shiki*, p.24

<sup>229</sup> Burton Watson (trans.), *Masaoka Shiki: Selected Poems*, p.116

<sup>230</sup> According to ancient Chinese belief, the otter performs a ‘sacrifice’ when it leaves part of its prey uneaten. Burton Watson (trans.), *Masaoka Shiki: Selected Poems*. p. 116



幽客閑無事

揭簾見暮山<sup>231</sup>

Accompaniment to a painting, 1883

The door was closed and nobody seemed to be home.

Just a crowd of ducks following a boy.

The owner of this house, totally freed from worldly matters,

Gazing at the sun setting behind the mountain.

Sōseki's poem was a seven-character *risshi*.

題畫

漱石

下人鎮日掩柴扃

也是乾坤一草亭

村靜牧童翻野笛

簷虛鬬雀蹴金鈴

溪南秀竹雲垂地

林後老槐風滿庭

春去夏來無好興

夢魂回處氣泠泠<sup>233</sup>

Accompaniment to a painting, 1883

I wonder who lives in the house whose door remained closed all day.

It was like the 'one grass house in the world' of Tu Fu's poem

The village was quiet and a shepherd boy's flute echoed.

On the empty eaves, sparrows are bustling

Their voices like little golden bells being hit.

<sup>231</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki* p.197

<sup>233</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki* p.198

The tall baboo growing by the southern valley waters connect the clouds to the earth.

The wind blowing from behind the pagoda tree, fills the garden.

Summer has arrived, chasing away the joys of Spring.

And my only indulgence a midday nap in the cool breeze.

Shiki's tendency to focus more on an objective portrayal while Sōseki was more interested in subjective expression is evident in these poems. Shiki conveys an image as close as possible to what he sees in the painting. He does not mention what he thinks or imagines about the painting, whereas Sōseki further described the scene surrounding the house, and the cool sensation in the house in the summer breeze. Sōseki wrote not only of what he can see but also of what the picture reminded him of, such as Tu Fu's poem. He even imagines the sound of flute.

Makoto Ueda quotes Sōseki:

The artist finds himself depicting neither nature nor the mind that projects nature, but rather his own interpretation of it. By 'his own interpretation' I mean the way in which he gives meaning to nature, the way in which he views nature."<sup>235</sup>

Ueda elaborates further:

No artist can, or should, reproduce nature exactly as it is. Sōseki thought of two reasons why this has to be so. One, influenced by Buddhism, is that nature as such is 'all too fleeting'. The other, more Western, is that whatever the artist

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<sup>235</sup> Makoto Ueda, *Modern Japanese Writers and the Nature of Literature*, p.2

takes from nature cannot ultimately be freed from ‘the way in which he views nature’. Both have profound implications for Sōseki’s concept of art.

Iida Rigyō noted, on the other hand that Shiki tried to bring new, interesting vitality to conventional *kanshi* by presenting in them his own observations and creating poetry from the heart, not from the words.

The entertaining quality of a poem comes from originality: the poetic words constructed as the individual poet’s idea. It is not the expression from the social position of a poet but from his vital energy as a living person.<sup>237</sup>

Sōseki, however, was not attempting to renew old modes of expression: he applied the strict rules of *kanshi* rhyme to express the psychological struggles and anguish of a human being who has to live through the difficulties of the modern, competitive world. In the sense that he used the *kanshi* form to express the inner, psychological world, Sōseki modernised the form.

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<sup>237</sup> Iida Rigyō, *Kaidō no Hana—Shiki Kanshi to Sōseki*, p.47

## 2-5 Conclusion:

The following table compares the *kanshi* of Shiki and Sōseki

	Sōseki	Shiki
Theme	Insecurity about fundamental questions of existence.	Innovative ideas, historical events, hero worship, patriotism, nationalism his illness
Motivation	To try to free himself from random sadness and search for <i>fūryū</i>	Kanshi practice as a way of nurturing virtue for a Confucian gentleman
Writing Styles	Many colour words and personification	Detailed observation and depictions of real objects in sketch method
Identity	Deeply individual, subjective expression; keeping an unskilful, stubborn attitude	Objective and realistic expression and autobiographic record
Ideal	White cloud country as ‘ <i>tōgenkyō</i> ’ and ‘Utopia’	Patriotic nationalism and survival of Japanese identity in modernization of verse
Concept of Art and Nature	Artists depict their own <u>interpretations</u> of nature, in relation to their inner psychological world.	Artists depict their own <u>observations</u> of nature

It is evident that the atmosphere and ambience of the relationship between Sōseki and Shiki encouraged innovation, creativity and exploration in both of them. Shiki fervently believed in the capacity of the traditional genres such as *kanshi* not only to be revived, but also to be useful to modern, post-traditional Japanese as successful forms of expression. Sōseki was not particularly interested in “modernizing” *kanshi* at any time in his life, but he certainly valued Shiki’s enthusiasm, encouragement and praise, and continued to respect the form as a means of self-expression throughout his life.

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<sup>241</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.12

## Chapter Three

### Sōseki's Haiku and Masaoka Shiki

#### Introduction

Sōseki first started writing haiku under the tutelage of Shiki while Shiki was living in Sōseki's house (called the Gudabutsuan) in Matsuyama. The haiku writers who gathered around Shiki at the Gudabutsuan were called the *Nihonha* poets, because Shiki spearheaded his haiku reform movement through articles in his *Nihon Shimbun* column 'Dassai Sho Oku Haiwa' which also published their "modern" haiku.

Yanagihara Kyokudō, Kawahigashi Hekigotō and Takahama Kyoshi were some of the best known of the *Nihonha* poets, who were in deliberate opposition to the more traditional poets, calling them *Tsukinamiha*..

During Shiki's stay in Matsuyama, these young haiku reformists, led by Shiki, formed a group called *Shōfūkai* (Wind in Pines Society) and gathered every day, practicing composing haiku on topics drawn from their real experience and following their own observations of nature. Shiki recognised Sōseki's ability and included him among the established haiku writers, even though Sōseki had only just over a year's experience. The majority of Sōseki's more than two thousand haiku were composed at this time, but after Shiki died, Sōseki's interest in haiku declined dramatically. For the rest of his life Sōseki composed haiku only on request, for example at New Year or on the Emperor's birthday.<sup>241</sup>

This chapter is constructed as follows:

3-1. The Haiku Exchange between Sōseki and Shiki.

3-2 Shiki's New Haiku Movement and Sōseki's Haiku

3-3 The Features of Sōseki's Haiku

3-4 Shiki's *shaseibun* and Sōseki's *I am a Cat*

3-5 Sōseki's and Buson's Haiku and *Kusamakura*

3-6 Conclusion

### 3-1 The Haiku Exchange between Sōseki and Shiki

On the night of May 9, 1889 Shiki experienced his first episode of spitting blood from tuberculosis. He then composed forty to fifty haiku on *hototogisu* (cuckoo) whose name is pronounced in kambun as 'shiki', for the first time using these characters as his pen name. The striking red colour inside the cuckoo's mouth makes it look as if it is spitting blood when it sings.<sup>242</sup> Sōseki responded to these haiku with his very first haiku on his visit to the hospitalised Shiki.<sup>243</sup>

Shiki wrote under the title *Cuckoo* (時鳥)

卯の花をめぐりてきたか時鳥<sup>244</sup>

Heading towards the sunflower, a little cuckoo.

卯の花の散るまで鳴くか子規<sup>246</sup>

Sing until the sunflower blossoms are all scattered, a little cuckoo.

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<sup>242</sup> Etō Jun, 'Shiki to no Deai', *Sōseki to Sono Jidai*, p.147-149

<sup>243</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 16

<sup>244</sup> Quoted in Etō Jun, 'Shiki to no Deai', *Sōseki to Sono Jidai*, p.149

<sup>246</sup> Etō Jun, 'Shiki to no Deai', *Sōseki to Sono Jidai*, p. 149

Sōseki Sōseki responded instantly since he wanted to cheer Shiki up, with a letter that included the saying, “to live is the sole end of man!”

帰ろふと泣かずに笑へ時鳥<sup>247</sup>

Do not cry at returning home but laugh, little cuckoo

聞かふとて誰も待たぬに時鳥<sup>248</sup>

You would like to be heard but nobody is waiting for you, little cuckoo.

The cuckoo was considered to be the soul of the sad emperor Botai of China who wished to go back his home country. Wada Toshio identified the allusion, noting that Sōseki used the word *kaeru* (to return) because Shiki had said that he would like to return his hometown of Matsuyama.<sup>250</sup> In Sōseki's second haiku, the cry of the *hototogisu* was depicted not as a positive, hopeful symbol, but as something inauspicious: missing was the singer who, according to the ancient saying, would wait for the first sound of the *hototogisu*'s cry to sing together. Wada Toshio noted that both haiku are appreciated as expressions of Sōseki's warm, empathetic friendship towards Shiki rather than as literary works of a high standard.<sup>251</sup>

In 1892 Shiki had failed his university exams and had decided to quit school. Sōseki advised Shiki to carry on studying and to graduate first before becoming a writer:

鳴くならば満月になけほととぎす。<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> *Sōseki Zenshu* vol. 17, p.5

<sup>248</sup> Etō Jun, ‘Shiki to no Deai’, *Sōseki to Sono Jidai*, p.149

<sup>250</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 275

<sup>251</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 275

<sup>252</sup> *Sōseki Zenshu* vol. 17 p.14



If crying, cry on a full moon, cuckoo.

However Shiki did not listen, quit the university and joined the *Nihon Shimbun*.

Sōseki sent Shiki the following haiku written in 1894 while staying at a temple, with the note that ‘I do not go out unless it is necessary. A few nuns are staying in the next room. It does not do me any good. Women are somehow bothersome.’ Sōseki was suffering a nervous collapse at the time and thought to recover by meditation at the temple. Thus he calls himself a monk with hair.

尼寺に有髪の僧を尋ね来よ。<sup>253</sup>

Come and visit a monk with hair in the nun’s temple

Wada points to the humour of this haiku as well as the warmth of their friendship, indicated by the fact that Sōseki asked Shiki to visit him at a time when he did not want to meet anyone at all.<sup>254</sup>

花に酔ふ事を許さぬ物思ひ。<sup>255</sup>

Unable to be intoxicated by flowers, lost in deep thoughts.

According to Wada Toshio, Sōseki wrote this poem in 1894 with a note asking Shiki ‘What makes you suffer? Is it a devil of poetry, a devil of illness or a devil of emotion?’ Shiki was working for the *Nihon Shimbun* and pursuing his haiku reform movement with great passion. Sōseki was questioning the cause of Shiki’s tremendous suffering: was it his battle for haiku reform, was it his illness, or was it some emotional crisis

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<sup>253</sup> *Sōseki Zenshu* vol. 17, p. 17

<sup>254</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.276

<sup>255</sup> *Sōseki Zenshu* vol. 17 p. 17

related to a woman? At this time Shiki wrote some haiku about women although it is not known whether he had any emotional entanglement.<sup>256</sup>

うき 人よ彼岸参りの薄化粧。 <sup>257</sup>

Worldly women: light cosmetics for entering the next world.

桃咲くヤ可愛ト思ふ女あり。 <sup>258</sup>

When the peach blossoms, there's a woman who I think is lovely.

Shiki wrote the following haiku when he left for Tokyo after staying with Sōseki in Matsuyama:

此夕野分に向いてわかれけり。 <sup>260</sup>

This evening, we will part, confronting a severe winter storm

The following haiku is Sōseki's farewell to Shiki.<sup>261</sup>

やるか御立ちやれ新酒菊の花。 <sup>264</sup>

Shall we leave? Let's depart, newly made rice-wine and chrysanthemums

According to Wada, Sōseki used traditional season words for autumn such as 'newly made rice-wine' and 'chrysanthemums', but expressed them in the dialect of Shiki's

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<sup>256</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 277

<sup>257</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.278

<sup>258</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.278

<sup>260</sup> Quoted in *Sōseki Zenshu* vol. 17, p. 28

<sup>261</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 279

<sup>264</sup> *Sōseki Zenshu* vol. 17 p.28

hometown, to bring a light tone into the sad farewell.<sup>265</sup> This is a good example of a modern haiku, conveying the emotion between close friends and a real situation by using dialect.

Another example of Sōseki's haiku on the same occasion, this time using colloquial language:

秋の雲ただむらむらと別れかな。<sup>266</sup>

Autumn clouds, suddenly seized by emotion, I want to leave everything behind.

According to Wada, the autumn clouds are a symbol of sudden changeability. And the pivot word 'muramurato', refers both to the autumn clouds and to the sudden and overwhelming feeling of uncertainty and gloom at the thought of parting.<sup>267</sup>

In 1892 Shiki wrote, 'Went to school, visited Tsubouchi Shoyo together with Sōseki'.

夕月に秋ある門を叩けり。<sup>270</sup>

Evening moon in autumn, a knock on the door.

Perhaps Shiki invited Sōseki to join him on a visit to Tsubouchi's place to discuss theories of literature. Wada notes the seasonal autumn phrase.<sup>271</sup>

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<sup>265</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.280

<sup>266</sup> *Sōseki Zenshu* vol. 17 p.28

<sup>267</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.281

<sup>270</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 289

<sup>271</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 289

Wada noted that Shiki wrote the following haiku in his diary on 17 December 1892 with a note ‘Sōseki came’:<sup>272</sup>

君にとてくはすものなし冬籠。<sup>273</sup>

There is nothing to offer you, winter basket.

Shiki had quit university and just entered the *Nihon Shimbun*. His financial situation seemed rather tight, so that he could not offer Sōseki anything to eat. Shiki felt bad about this and expressed his straightened circumstances as an empty basket in winter.

われをとふ故人心ありうら若葉<sup>274</sup>。

Called on me, my old friend, fresh young leaves.

Wada noted that Shiki called Sōseki ‘old friend’ even though they had been friends for less than five years. To Shiki, Sōseki seemed like lively, fresh green young leaves. This poem expresses Shiki’s cheerful and refreshed feeling after Sōseki’s visit.<sup>275</sup>

Another of Shiki’s poems (July, in 1893) when Sōseki visited him.

子子の蚊になる頃や何学士。<sup>276</sup>

You are going to become a bachelor of what?

Mosquito larvae will hatch mosquitos.

Wada noted:

Shiki knew that Sōseki would become a Bachelor of Arts, but expressed a complicated, humorous reaction towards Sōseki’s receiving the degree by asking

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<sup>272</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.290

<sup>273</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.290

<sup>274</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.293

<sup>275</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.293

<sup>276</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki* p. 294

what kind of bachelor. Shiki, who had dropped out of the same degree the previous year, was happy to see Sōseki complete his studies, but felt some regret or shame that he himself could not finish the degree.<sup>277</sup>

Wada pointed out the interesting use of the pun, *bun*, which sounds the both like a mosquito's flying and the word 'Arts' in Japanese.

Shiki again wrote about Sōseki becoming a Bachelor of Arts in his diary in August 1893

あさがおや君いかめしき文学士。<sup>278</sup>

The Morning-glory flower, you become a dignified Bachelor of Arts.

Shiki described achieving a Bachelor of Arts as something dignified, yet he chose a morning glory flower as the seasonal phrase. According to Wada, the morning glory was a flower of the common people, in contrast to the noble image of a Bachelor of Arts.<sup>279</sup>

Shiki came back to Japan, ill, after serving as a military journalist in the Sino-Japanese War. The following 1895 poem expressed his relief at being able to settle in his friend's study to discuss haiku and literature.<sup>280</sup>

桔梗活けてしばらくかりの書斎や。<sup>281</sup>

The Chinese-bell flower arrangement, a study borrowed for a while.

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<sup>277</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.295

<sup>278</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.295

<sup>279</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.294

<sup>280</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.296

<sup>281</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.295

The following poem is Shiki's farewell, when his time at Sōseki's home in Matsuyama had come to an end and he had to return to Tokyo:

行く我にとどまるなれに秋二つ。<sup>283</sup>

For me, about to leave, two autumns will remain separate.

Wada pointed out that the 'two autumns' refer to the two different experiences of autumn Shiki and Sōseki will have now that they will be separated. Once Shiki has left Matsuyama, they will be in two different worlds. Shiki contrasts the word 'going' of people and 'staying' of the season, giving a continuous feeling of loneliness.<sup>284</sup>

Two of Shiki's haiku, written on December 30 in 1895, with the note 'Sōseki and Kyoshi called: two haiku'

語りけりおおつごもりの来ぬところ。<sup>285</sup>

A lot of conversation, the place where the busy New Year's eve never comes.

漱石が来て虚士が来て大三十日。<sup>286</sup>

Sōseki visited, Kyoshi visited, the New Year's eve.

Sōseki went to Tokyo to meet his future wife for the first time on December 27. Shiki expressed the joy of talking between friends, and this special occasion was far more important than the hustle and bustle of the ordinary New Year's eve. Wada noted that in Shiki's second haiku, by using the same phrases 'Sōseki came' and 'Kyoshi came' repeatedly, Shiki portrayed how he felt at that time.<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.297

<sup>284</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.298

<sup>285</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.298

<sup>286</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.298

<sup>287</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.298

In 1897 Sōseki wrote the following poem in a letter to Shiki with the note ‘remembering Shiki’ when he was working in Kumamoto as a teacher and considering changing his career to become a writer. Wada commented that the quiet sound of spring rain matches the atmosphere of longing for a missing friend.<sup>288</sup>

春雨の夜すがら物を思はする。<sup>289</sup>

The night of quiet spring-rain reminded me more of emptiness.

Shiki wrote the following haiku on Sōseki’s marriage in 1896.

ぼうぼうたる桃の若葉や君めとる。<sup>290</sup>

Young leaves of peach trees growing luxuriously, you are taking a wife.

The phrase ‘*bobotaru momono wakaba*’ came from the ancient Chinese *Book of Songs*.

桃之夭夭

其葉蓁蓁

之子于歸

宜其家人<sup>291</sup>

The peaches are fresh,

The leaves of the trees are growing vigorously.

The girl is to be wedded

It is nice for the family to receive the bride.

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<sup>288</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 284

<sup>289</sup> *Sōseki Zenshu* vol. 17 p.216

<sup>290</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.300

<sup>291</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.301

The vigorous young peach leaves are symbols of a healthy young bride who will bring many children and a prosperous future to the family. Shiki frequently borrowed classical phrases from Chinese poetry to express his ideas in haiku, since Shiki was educated in Chinese literary works.<sup>292</sup>

Shiki wrote the following two haiku with a note ‘Sending off Sōseki’.

秋すすき来年あはむさりながら。<sup>293</sup>

Autumn, withered eulalia, next year we are going to be united.

秋の雨荷物ぬらすな風引くな。<sup>294</sup>

Autumn rain, do not let the luggage get wet and do not catch a cold.

In her memoirs, Sōseki’s wife, Kyōko, noted that these haiku were written on the front page of a small book, a gift from Shiki, in 1900 at Sōseki’s departure for England, but according to Shiki’s haiku manuscripts, they were written in 1897.<sup>295</sup> Wada argued that it is more likely Kyōko’s mistake, since Shiki would not have written that they would meet the following year on Sōseki’s departure for a two year trip to England. Therefore, these are probably farewell poems when Sōseki returned to Kumamoto after visiting Shiki’s sickbed in Tokyo. Wada commented that Shiki’s second haiku reminded readers of the warm affection of a parent caring for a child.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.301

<sup>293</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.302

<sup>294</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.303

<sup>295</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.303

<sup>296</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.303-304



### 3-2. Shiki's New Haiku Movement and Sōseki's Haiku

Shiki and the *Nihonha* writers tried to bring life back to haiku at a time when new forms of poetry were emerging and the novel was esteemed as the major genre of literature, while haiku was left languishing. Shiki started the haiku reformation because he was concerned that even though haiku had great potential to function as literature the genre was doomed to decline. He firmly believed that the objectives of literature are to depict real emotions of real people and to promote 'noble graces' in the human heart.<sup>297</sup> He considered the haiku's lineage to stem from the court *tanka*, which were associated with noble courtly and samurai virtues. However, over the years, haiku masters had made haiku writing a popular amusement and a commercial activity. Shiki believed that haiku could be revived by bringing realism into the genre.

Shiki serialized *Haikai Taiyō* (The Elements of Haiku) in the *Nihon Shimbun* from October to December 1895. In this article he repeatedly made the point that haiku is a part of literature and literature is a part of art.<sup>298</sup> The basic concept of haiku that Shiki was advocating was as a kind of fine-art literature, where the theory of sketching could be applied. Shiki was critical of the *Tsukinamiha* haiku writers' idea that haiku is the genre of ordinary people, a popular genre, not suitable for high art. For him people were citizens<sup>300</sup>, each individual an equal in the nation, and haiku should become the significant, considered expression of the individual.

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<sup>297</sup> 'Dassai Shōku Haiwa', *Masaoka Shiki Shū*, p.143

<sup>298</sup> Quoted in Kanno Akimasa, Takahashi Hideo, 'Ima Shiki o Kangaeru', *Kokubungaku*, p.15

<sup>300</sup> Miyoshi Yukio, 'Haiku no Kindai', *Kokubungaku*, p.36

The realism advocated in the development of the novel at the time and the romantic idealism exemplified by Buson's haiku were both promoted equally among the *Nihonha* writers. Shiki even labelled Hekigotō, is “the realistic man”, and Takahama Kyoshi, who often wrote about old, foreign and unusual themes as “the idealistic man”. In general, the flavour of their haiku was realistic through plain expression, but was nevertheless individualistic.<sup>301</sup>

In his essay ‘Haiku Shinha no Keiko’ Shiki wrote that through civilization the world has become a more complicated and closely interrelated place.<sup>302</sup> Fine art and literature have also progressed in the same direction and progress means diversity and change. He contended that the haiku genre can be changed even in a short period of time through the involvement of many different haiku writers. Thus the new haiku of the Meiji era have the diversity and the flair of the Genroku era, and of ancient Chinese and Japanese poetry, as well as including special modern characteristics that the classical haiku did not have.

Shiki use Hekigotō's haiku as an example of the development of complexity in Meiji haiku.<sup>303</sup>

強力の清水濁して去りにけり。<sup>304</sup>

Mountain guided clear water muddied then, clear again .

Hekigotō, one of the most prominent of Shiki's disciples, used the phrase *sarini keri* (leave or be passed to be settled) to illustrate how the water changes from clear to muddy when a human enters it and clear up again when he leaves. This complex image

<sup>301</sup> Kitazumi Toshio, ‘Shasei haiku oyobi shaseibun no kenkyū, p.109-p.111

<sup>302</sup> Masaoka Shiki, *Masaoka Shikishū, Meiji Bungaku zenshu* 53, p. 217

<sup>303</sup> Masaoka Shiki, *Masaoka Shikishū, Meiji Bungaku Zenshū* 53, p. 217

<sup>304</sup> Masaoka Shiki, *Masaoka Shikishū, Meiji Bungaku Zenshū* 53, p. 217

of clear water changing over time is well expressed here and the visual impact and connotations are more sophisticated than that of earlier haiku. According to Shiki this is the effect new haiku should be striving for. Shiki compared this haiku with earlier haiku, using the same concept.<sup>305</sup>

Buson's poem written in Tenmei (1781-1788):

二人して結べば濁る清水かな。

Two people together, muddy water clears.

Mokuga's poem in Kansei (1789-1800):

濁りても中からすめる清水かな。

Though it muddied, becoming clear from the middle -- clear water.

Gomei wrote in Bunka (1804-1807):

濁しては澄むを見て居る清水かな。

Muddied water, always ready to settle -- clear water.

Baishitsu wrote in Tempō (1830-1843):

湧き口を尋ねて濁す清水かな。

At the mouth of the spring, muddied water clear.

Shiki further illustrated his point about the development of modern haiku using comparisons with Buson's haiku as examples<sup>306</sup>:

Buson wrote

A) 日暮れるに雉打つ春の山辺かな。

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<sup>305</sup> All four poems below appear in Masaoka Shiki, *Masaoka Shikishū*, *Meiji Bungaku Zenshū* 53, p. 217

<sup>306</sup> All three poems appear in Masaoka Shiki, *Masaoka Shikishū*, *Meiji Bungaku Zenshū* 53, p. 218

At the time of sun-set, hunting a pheasant, mountain field in spring.

B) 雉打つて帰る家路の日は高し。

Coming home after hunting the pheasants, the sun is high on a road.

Akitake (秋竹)'s (MeijiPeriod):

将軍の雉打つて帰る玄関かな。

The Lord's home-coming after hunting the pheasants, the entry hall.

Buson's haiku (B) has a more complicated image than his haiku (A) while Akitake's haiku has an even more complex association of ideas than both of Buson's haiku. Akitake's haiku depicts the entry hall, full of excitement and anticipation at the return of the Lord's hunting excursion. Here the hunting scene and the entry hall of the castle preparing for the lord's return (two different times and two different events) are superimposed.<sup>307</sup>

Shiki argued that the complexity of an image has value not only as a painting but also as a map, which carries more information. Adding further abstract levels of meaning to a concrete scene is a way of making a comprehensive, multifarious image. The many-sided image can also be analyzed as many small spaces and short moments, which add vigour and vividness to the scene.

Another feature of the new taste that emerged in Meiji haiku is their understated quality, focussing on ordinary events. Instead of concentrating on one focal point and making a

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<sup>307</sup> Masaoka Shiki, 'Haiku Shinha no Keikō' *Meiji Bungaku zenshū* 53, p.218-219

lofty, idealistic, intense statement, they feature a subtly uncertain, unfinished, ambience around ordinary events.<sup>309</sup>

In his 1899 essay ‘The Origin and Development of Poetry’<sup>310</sup> Shiki adapted Spencer’s concept of the ‘economy of mental energy’ and argued that haiku had deeper meaning and were more interesting than other forms of verse, even though a much shorter form. He emphasized the importance of suggestiveness or implication in haiku and claimed that haiku writers should develop their skill in order to convey this suggestiveness. Therefore, ‘to portray as it is’ is not good enough as a method in haiku writing. Kitazumi sees Shiki’s negative attitude towards the mere depiction of reality in his emphasis on metaphor.<sup>311</sup> Kitazumi Toshio notes that Shiki’s first *shasei* haiku written in 1885 already displayed elements of this idea of complex realism.

雪ふりや棟の白猫声ばかり。<sup>312</sup>

Snow is falling, only a white cat’s voice at the edge of the roof.

In 1888, Shiki joined Shōrobankai, a haiku club in Matsuyama attached to the *Nihon Shimbun*, and actively participated in its various literary activities. In 1895 Sōseki sent sixty-eight haiku to Shiki of which Shiki chose only four for publication in *Shōroban*, the magazine published by the *Nihonha*. The following, perhaps Sōseki’s first *shasei* haiku, are three of the four:

雲きたり雲去る瀑の紅葉かな<sup>313</sup>

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<sup>309</sup> Masaoka Shiki, ‘Haiku Shinha no Keikō’. p.220-221

<sup>310</sup> ‘Shōka no Kigen oyobi Hensen’ in *Masagoshū*

<sup>311</sup> Kitazumi Toshio, *Shasei haiku oyobi shaseibun no Kenkyū*, p. 6- 7

<sup>312</sup> Kitazumi Toshio, *Shasei haiku oyobi Shaseibun no Kenkyū*, p.7

<sup>313</sup> *Sōseki Zenshu* vol. 17 p.52

The clouds come and go, waterfall of autumn leaves

唐黍 を干すや谷間の一軒家 <sup>314</sup>

One house in a valley of the mountains, drying Chinese millet

いたづらに菊咲きつらん故郷は<sup>315</sup>

In vain, chrysanthemums are blooming in a row, home-town indeed!

The first two haiku were written when Sōseki went to see two waterfalls named Shirai and Karakō, near Matsuyama city, but that the last one was written totally from the imagination.

The realism in Shiki's haiku underwent subtle changes of emphasis over the time he was working towards haiku reformation. Shiki was influenced by Nakamura Fusetsu, a western-style painter, who advocated the sketch method (*shasei*) in western painting in preference to the model-copying method (*punpon*) in Japanese painting. Shiki applied the sketch method in haiku writing and used the term 'sketch' instead of the words like 'reality' or 'photograph.'<sup>316</sup> At first, Shiki was looking for picturesque images and shapes when he practiced *shasei* haiku. Later, in 1900, he developed the *shaseibun* concept in the sense of writing about reality: realism and the depiction of a real situation.<sup>317</sup> Shiki also wrote not only of actual happenings or reality, but also from an artist's image of reality.

The following are some of Shiki's examples.<sup>318</sup>

早稲の香や小山にそふて汽車走る

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<sup>314</sup> Sōseki Zenshu vol. 17 p.53

<sup>315</sup> Sōseki Zenshu vol. 17 p.53

<sup>316</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki* p.140

<sup>317</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki* p. 142

<sup>318</sup> The four haiku are quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p. 141

The fragrance of the early ripening rice, a train runs by, the air blast on a hill

初秋の石壇高し杉木立

The stone altar in early autumn is high, as the willow trees stand tall.

一日の秋にぎやかに祭りかな

One autumn day, lively festivities

祭 見に狐も尾花かざし来よ

Fox come to see the festival too, your tail decorated with a flower.

Matsui Toshihiko noted that above haiku are easily transferable into pictures. However, the second last one is more conceptual while the last one is based on fantasy.<sup>319</sup>

In his essay, ‘Twenty-four Styles of Haiku’, Shiki gave examples of many different types of *shasei* haiku: the objective style, the painting style, the natural style. Some of his haiku are total fiction, not based on realism at all. Wada Toshio pointed out that Shiki’s illness prevented him from relying exclusively on the sketch method. Bedridden from 1897 to his death in 1902, Shiki’s sketch method over those years had to be limited to the view from his bed. In fact, he wrote a number of haiku containing metaphors and contrasts and comparisons and some of his haiku that supposedly portrayed real situations were actually drawn from the imagination. Kanda Hideo<sup>320</sup> noted that Shiki did not find it contradictory to advocate Buson’s haiku, which were rather imaginative, while at the same time promoting the sketch method.

Sōseki wrote fewer haiku in this *shasei* category than he did subjective haiku. Wada argued that Shiki emphasized the importance of the sketch from a reality to Sōseki since

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<sup>319</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki* p.142

<sup>320</sup> Kanda Hideo, ‘Gendai Haiku Sōshi’ *Gendai Haikushū*, quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki* p.144

Sōseki was at the beginner stage and had a tendency towards writing more conceptual haiku. Shiki commented: “Sōseki wrote haiku for the first time in 1895. He has developed uniqueness in content and in technique ever since. Many of his haiku are fresh and unusual.”<sup>322</sup> Wada Toshio presents examples of Sōseki’s good *shasei* haiku:

むくむくと砂の中より春の水。<sup>324</sup>

Pumping out from the sand, water in spring.

底の石動いて見ゆる清水哉。

Rocks at the bottom seeming to move, clear water.

Shiki tried to establish guidelines for writing vivid, interesting haiku. However, for Sōseki, a haiku meant the expression of his inner self. According to Wada, Sōseki generally seemed not follow Shiki’s objective sketch method, but rather wrote haiku freely, as a means of getting something off his chest.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>324</sup> Both haiku appear in *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 17 p.126

<sup>326</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki* p. 148,149



### **3-3. The Features of Sōseki's Haiku Chinese Poetry and Sōseki's Haiku**

Sōseki, like many haiku writers, alluded to Chinese poetry in various ways. Shiki also translated Chinese poems into haiku, and Shiki's own haiku also show the clear influence of Chinese poetry. The haiku below are some of the examples of Sōseki's haiku linked with Chinese poetry.

In the following 1895 haiku Sōseki alluded to *Twenty Poems on Drinking Rice-wine* by Tao Yuanmei, known as a poet of nature with a noble character, free of wordly ambitions. He lived far from the city, refusing an official position from the emperor.

菊の香や晋の高士は酒が好き。<sup>357</sup>

The fragrance of chrysanthemum, a nobleman in Jin likes rice-wine.

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<sup>357</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.17, p. 33

Another 1895 haiku about chrysanthemums and Tao Yuanmei:

憂い日あらば此酒に酔へ菊の主<sup>359</sup>

On a sorrowful day, be drunk with this rice-wine, chrysanthemum lord.

Sōseki also alluded frequently to Tu Fu's (712-770) poems as in the following 1891 poem which quotes Tu Fu's *Eight Drinking Fairies' Songs* about He Zhizhang (659-744) well known for his generous nature and his wine drinking.

知章騎馬似乗船

眼花落井水底眠<sup>360</sup>

Zhizhang rides on horse as if floating in a boat

The flowers fall from the drunken eyes, asleep, down deep to the bottom of the well

馬の背で船漕ぎ出すや春の旅<sup>361</sup>

Let the boat float on the back of a horse, journey in spring.

The following haiku alludes to *The Song of the Upright Spirit* by Wen T'ien-hsiang (1236-1283), written after Wen was imprisoned by the invading Yuan army, and became popular in Meiji Japan amongst Japanese patriotic soldiers.<sup>362</sup>

水仙白く古道顔色を照らしけり。<sup>363</sup>

White daffodils, illuminating the virtue of the ancient loyal martyr.

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<sup>359</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.17, p. 32

<sup>360</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.79

<sup>361</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.17, p. 8

<sup>362</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.83

<sup>363</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.17, p. 83

Wen T'ien-hsiang's poem:

風簷展書讀

古道照顏色

"In the breeze from the eaves, I spread out a book to read;  
Before me shines the virtue of the ancient loyal martyr!"<sup>364</sup>

In the following haiku Sōseki alludes to Li Bai's (701-762) *Drinking with a Gentleman in the Mountains*.

花に來たりしつを鼓するに意ある人。<sup>367</sup>

Came for flowers, who wish to play Chinese koto.

Li Bai's poem:

山中對酌

兩人對酌山花開

一盃一盃復一盃

我醉欲眠君暫去

明朝有意抱琴來

We both have drunk to their birth, the mountain flowers

A toast, a toast, and again another

Gentlemen, please stop coming for a while, since I am drunk and longing to sleep.

Tomorrow morning, if you like, come with lutes.<sup>368</sup>

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<sup>364</sup> Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *Five Hundred Years of Chinese Poetry*, 1150-1650, p.55

<sup>367</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.17, p. 139

<sup>368</sup> Arthur Cooper (trans.), *Li Po and Tu Fu*, p.110

Sōseki wrote the following haiku inspired by a poem of Du Mu (803-852)

茶煙禪とう外は師走の日影哉。<sup>369</sup>

The smoke for making tea at a Zen pavilion, teacher's shadow busy moving.

Du Mu's poem:

酔後題僧院(After drinking, at the monk's monastery)

今日髮糸禪棟畔

茶煙輕揚落花風

Today, surrounding the seat of an elderly monk for meditation in a temple

Tea-making steam is lightly floating up and petals are floating down on the breeze

The following 1895 haiku uses the phrase 春王の正月 from a book by Kongzi. The story of the army of crabs, bees, hand-mills and eggs, animals and things together coming out to fight their enemy appeared in a book of old Japanese tales popular in Japan in his time.

春王の正月 蟹の軍さ哉<sup>370</sup>

January of Xunjiu time, the army of crabs.

Sōseki's financial situation as a teacher in Kumamoto was rather tight, so he lamented his poor salary by using the expression 五斗米 in the following 1897 haiku. This

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<sup>369</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.17, p. 102

<sup>370</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 17, p.55

expression referred to the salary of a governor in ancient China, famous for its meagreness.

五斗米を餅にして食ふ春来たり<sup>371</sup>。

Eating a salary rice-cake: spring has come.

### Subjective Expression and Satire in Sōseki's haiku

In a letter to Shiki Sōseki complained "My weakness in realistic expression has been obvious from the first day I began to learn to write haiku. However, it is also caused by my natural disposition."<sup>372</sup>Sōseki's personality and his belief that art is an expression of one's inner self made it difficult for him to stick to objective portrayal. He was more interested in portraying the inner self. Wada lists some of these haiku.<sup>373</sup>

正月の男といはれ拙に処す。(1898)

To be called a New Year's man, how embarrassing.

愚かければ独りすずしくおはします。(1903)

If you are a fool, you walk alone in a cool mood.

無人島の天子とならばすずしかろ。(1903)

Become a king of an uninhabited island, feel cool about it.

Wada pointed to the humour and originality of the idea of becoming a king of an empty land.

能もなき教師とならんあら涼し。(1903)

What a lonely sensation, realising that you became a teacher without talent.

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<sup>371</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 17, p.194

<sup>372</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.15

<sup>373</sup> The seven haiku are quoted in Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.15-17

人に亡くし鶴に生まれて冴えかえる。(1897)

Died as human, reborn as a crane: cool and clean.

木瓜咲くやそせき拙を守るべく。(1897)

The cucumber flower blooming, Sōseki will keep his unskilful nature.

Sōseki wrote even his name in the following haiku as an extreme form of self-expression:

月に行く 漱石、妻を忘れたり。(1897)

Going to moon viewing, Sōseki has forgotten his wife.

The expression ‘forget the wife’ comes from *The Analects of Confucius*, but Sōseki applied it to the real situation of having to leave his wife at Kamakura while she recovered from a miscarriage, and returning to his work place at Kumamoto. The subtlety and restraint of expression intensifies the sadness of the poem: by saying he had forgotten his wife, he obviously shows that he has not. The phrase ‘Going to the moon viewing’ adds to tone of elegant, restrained beauty.

A strong feature of Sōseki’s haiku is their humour and satire. Shiki, impressed by Sōseki’s humour, once commented:

Sōseki was originally a very serious, sincere and strict person who did not allow the students to violate the rules of the school at all. Usually he is so serious that I have never seen him laughing with a big open mouth. It seems that true humor is only possible to a sincere person.<sup>374</sup>

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<sup>374</sup> ‘Bokujū Itteki’, *Masaoka Shikishū*, p.91

Wada<sup>375</sup> grouped Sōseki's satirical haiku into five categories: haiku based on fairy tales; haiku based on personification of birds and insects; haiku based on unusually original metaphors; haiku based on Chinese historical phrases; haiku based on Japanese *waka* or *yokyoku* (No play); and mere playful jokes using exaggeration, coarse language, or copying a customary expression (not in the category of 'elegantly funny' by Shiki's definition).

Son Soon-ok illustrates how Sōseki satirized himself in the haiku below describing himself as a scarecrow and an unskilful person.<sup>376</sup>

某は安山子にて候雀どの。(1903)

I am a scarecrow, Lord Sparrow.

明月や拙者も無事で此通り。(1897)

Full moon, and an miserable person both pass through safely.

Sōseki found life as a teacher at Kumamoto extremely difficult. He expressed his inner discord and his wish to become a monk or a violet and hide away from this human world in the following haiku:

浮き世いかに坊主となりて昼寝する。<sup>377</sup> (1896)

Out of the mundane world to become a monk and have midday naps.

すみれ程小さき人に生まれたし。<sup>378</sup> (1897)

Wishing to be born as a small violet.

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<sup>375</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku* p.31-32

<sup>376</sup> Son Soon-ok, 'Sōseki Haikue Natanan Pungja', Kweon Hyuck-Keon (ed.) *Natsume Sōseki Moon-hack Yeonku*, p.189

<sup>377</sup> Sōseki Zenshū, vol.17, p. 150

<sup>378</sup> Sōseki Zenshū, vol.17, p. 204

In her memoirs, Sōseki's wife, Kyōko<sup>379</sup> mentioned that sometimes Sōseki laughed while he was reading a haiku book or writing a haiku. Below was a haiku that Sōseki showed her as funny.

両方にひげのあるなり猫の恋。<sup>380</sup>

Both of them have whiskers, a cat's love.

When Kyōko asked what was so funny, since it was only natural that both the cat and its partner, being another cat, would have whiskers. Sōseki replied that that is why Kyōko did not understand the haiku. For Sōseki humour is one of the important elements of haiku.

In the following 1896 haiku Sōseki portrayed a person who folds his hands inside his sleeves and leaves the book opened on a desk unread, since the room is too cold. He quotes the old Chinese saying “doing nothing and just watching” adding a lofty, ancient aura to a humble, poverty-stricken scene:

冬来たり袖手して書を傍観す。<sup>383</sup>

Winter came, folding hands in the sleeves and just gazing at a book.

Sōseki wrote the following haiku on the birth of his first daughter in 1899. The humorous, even sarcastic image is indeed one of detachment and realistic observation:

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<sup>379</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*.p.30

<sup>380</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*.p.30

<sup>383</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.17, p. 181



安安と海鼠の如き子を生めり。<sup>384</sup>

Without trouble, gave birth to a child like a sea-cucumber.

Sōseki wrote the following haiku in a note saying “At the end of a letter of apology for refusing an invitation to attend a prize-giving occasion”. The invitation was from Prime Minister Nishizono Terakomo in 1907 for Sōseki to receive an award. Sōseki’s real reason for not attending was that he did not like such occasions. His spirit of defiance is expressed in this delightful satire:

時鳥廁半ばに出かねたり<sup>385</sup>

A cuckoo at the toilet, too busy to go out.

Another, much later poem (1912) illustrates Sōseki’s humorous treatment of his illness, with the headnote ‘In the car, on the way to hospital to have an operation for removing piles’:

秋風や屠られに行く牛の尻。<sup>386</sup>

Autumn wind, cow's bottom on the way to the slaughter house.

Sōseki, who felt he did not have talent as a teacher, wrote about incompetent teachers and idle students and monks (whom he had observed during his Zen temple meditation experiences).<sup>387</sup>:

永き日やいだを講ずる博士あり。(1896)<sup>388</sup>

Long late spring day, a doctor lecturing on an old Buddhist story.

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<sup>384</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.17, p. 333

<sup>385</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.17, p. 368

<sup>386</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.17, p. 438

<sup>387</sup> Quoted in Son Soon-ok, p.196

<sup>388</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 17, p.108

せんせいの疎髪を吹くや秋の風。(1899)<sup>389</sup>

Autumn wind, blowing the fine hairs of Teacher's head.

なに食わぬ和尚の顔や河豚汁。(1895)<sup>390</sup>

A monk's face pretending he hasn't eaten anything, the blowfish soup.

### Death and Sōseki's Haiku

When facing the death of a person or even pet animals Sōseki's haiku achieved levels of depth and sincerity as skilled as of any specialist haiku poet. In other words, when Sōseki suppressed his sense of play and expressed genuine emotion, he could write deeply moving haiku. Most of the haiku on this theme were composed after Shiki's death and exhibit and movement away from *shasei* haiku

Sōseki was in London when he received the news of Shiki's death from Takahama Kyoshi in November 1902, a month before he was due to return to Japan. Sōseki wrote to Kyoshi: "I am trying to write mourning haiku for Shiki, but inspiration does not come readily while I live a western style life."<sup>391</sup>

筒袖や秋の棺にしたがはず。<sup>392</sup>

Tight sleeved western clothes, do not suit for an autumn coffin.

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<sup>389</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 17, p.323

<sup>390</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 17, p.428

<sup>391</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.132

<sup>392</sup> Quoted in Son Soon-ok, p. 284

Sōseki satirized himself, in this poem for wearing western clothes on the occasion of his beloved friend's death. The emotion in this haiku is restrained but an expression of deepest sorrow.

In a letter from London to his wife, Sōseki wrote "On a foggy day, it is darker than a moon-lit night, and not pleasant at all. I would like to go back to Japan soon to see the clear sky." In Sōseki's memory, Shiki is vividly still alive, but not present in this world, just a phantom in the foggy streets of London. The haiku below is replete with aching loneliness and grief just like the thick yellow fog of London. <sup>393</sup>

霧黄なる市に動くや影法師。<sup>394</sup>

In the mist of the yellow city fog moves the ghostly Buddhist priest.

Kusuoko, the wife of Sōseki's friend Otsuka Yasuji, was a good friend of Sōseki's in her own right, as well as a well-known writer. Sōseki was ill in bed when he heard of her death in 1910, and the haiku below was his response to the news:

有る程の菊放げいれよ棺の中<sup>397</sup>

Let's scatter all the funeral chrysanthemums we have, in the coffin

In a review of this haiku, Tōyōjō commented that there were as many layers of emotion in this poem as numbers of chrysanthemums: respect, care and deep affection for the

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<sup>393</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki to Shiki*, p.287

<sup>394</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 17, p. 345

<sup>397</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 17, p. 426

deceased, and challenge to death rather than fear.<sup>398</sup> Torahiko added, “It has a reserved, transcendental attitude. It may even seem cold. Even though Sōseki felt strongly, this haiku has a reserved, subdued, light touch.... The surface expression is not passionate, but the feeling is intense: not the direct western way of expression but the indirect eastern way.”<sup>399</sup> Wada Toshio considered this haiku one of Sōseki’s most passionate, in the use of the command form of the verb.<sup>400</sup>

Sōseki cared not only about human life but also the life of the animals. He wrote a number of haiku on the death or burial of animals.

蛤とならざるをいたみ菊の露<sup>404</sup>

The sorrow of a sparrow not yet become a clam, dew on the chrysanthemum

Wada identified the allusion to becoming a clam from an old Chinese tale. “Sōseki felt it was pitiful that sparrow died without having become a clam. However, he would like to bathe the sparrow with the dew on the chrysanthemum, since he could not put it into the sea, as in the old tale.”<sup>405</sup> This 1899 haiku is valued as exhibiting Sōseki’s sensitivity towards small animals, but Wada considered it inferior because the emotion is expressed too indirectly to make an impact on the reader.

The following haiku was written in 1908 with the headnote, “Replying to the announcement of the death of a paddy-bird by Tōyōjō, June 30”:

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<sup>398</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.120

<sup>399</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.122

<sup>400</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.122

<sup>404</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 17, p. 329

<sup>405</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.123

青梅や空しき籠に雨の糸<sup>406</sup>

Green unripe plums, the threads of rain through an empty cage

A year earlier, when Sōseki's pet paddy-bird died because of his carelessness, he wrote about it in the essay 'A Paddy-bird,' publishing it in instalments in the *Asahi Shimbun*. According to Wada the death of Tōyōjō's paddy-bird reminded Sōseki of his own pet's death. The background image of green unripe plums projects an image of life, energy and freshness in contrast to the empty cage of the dead bird. Threads of rain are the tangible evidence of Sōseki's sadness.

In his essay 'The Grave of the Cat' in *Eijitsu Shohin* (1908) Sōseki described the situation and the appearance of his dying cat with detailed sensitivity. "The cat's gaze gradually changed. At first, it became absent-minded, as if gazing at images from a long distance, but still with some focus. Then it trembled violently. The cast of the eyes became deeper and deeper, finally becoming like lightning after sunset." <sup>407</sup> Sōseki perceived the last flicker of life in the cat's eyes, not as something weak but as something powerful, showing Sōseki's respect for the power of the life-force.

A haiku on the grave of his cat.

此の下に稲妻 起る 宵 あらん。 <sup>408</sup>

Under this tomb lies a cat that brought lightening.

### 3-4. Shiki's *Shaseibun* and Sōseki's *I am a Cat*

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<sup>406</sup> Sōseki *Zenshū*, vol. 17, p. 396

<sup>407</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku* p.26

<sup>408</sup> Sōseki *Zenshū*, vol. 17, p. 397

<sup>410</sup> Nishimura Yoshiko, *Sanposuru Sōseki*, p.59

Shiki's concept of *shaseibun* and particularly the idea of *yama* influenced Sōseki's early works such as *I am a Cat* (1905-6), in particular, but also remained significant in his approaches to writing throughout his life. Nishimura Yoshiko<sup>410</sup> noted Shiki's custom, on his sickbed, of writing (when he was able), or requiring his disciples to tell him, stories with a funny or striking climax or *yama*, in order to distract him from the pain. The worse his pain got the funnier or more striking the story had to be, never setting aside, however, the focus on ordinary, everyday life situations. Sōseki, far away in England at the time, could not share with the other *Yamakai* members these duties, to his great sorrow. Thus, his first novel, *I am a Cat*, serialised in *Hototogisu* as short vignettes of every day life with funny, striking incidents and climaxes, became his belated tribute to Shiki, consciously written as exercises in *shaseibun*.

Nishimura further points to both Sōseki and Shiki's interest in *rakugo* as contributing to the notion of creating humorous climaxes in each story, while Hiranai Toshiden<sup>411</sup> emphasized the sympathetic relationship between the narrator and the reader and the warm response that the readers can make to *shaseibun* stories as central features of *shaseibun*.

Sōseki later explored further this sympathetic element of *shaseibun* in his essay, *Shaseibun*, published in the *Yomiuri Shimbun* in 1907:

There are many differences between *shaseibun* and other realistic writings. One of the essential differences that no one has discussed is the state of mind of a writer... This attitude is comparable to that of a parent towards their children. Parents and children are different in that they are ruled by different levels of

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<sup>411</sup> Hiranai Toshiden, 'Shasei to Kosho', *Bungaku*, September, 1984

emotion. Parents do not cry even though their children are crying. A *shasei* writer observes a crying child without crying himself. It is not a merciless indifference. A *shasei* writer has sympathy towards the human world, but he does not sob together with the child. He looks on from the sidelines with a smile of deepest sympathy. Therefore, *shasei* writers do not write too seriously; on the contrary, there is a humorous component to their expression.”<sup>412</sup>

This detached, but sympathetic attitude is a feature of oriental literature rather than Western literature according to Sōseki.<sup>413</sup>

### 3-5. Haiku and *Kusamakura*

The stance of a detached but sympathetic attitude, which can be seen as progressing Shiki’s *shasei* style further, is developed at length in *Kusamakura*. According to Nishimura Yoshiko, Sōseki wrote *Kusamakura* with the deliberate intention of combining *shaseibun*, *kanshi* and haiku, eastern genres, with the novel, a direct import from the western culture.<sup>414</sup> She points out that *Kusamakura* is written in a style which combines the written language with an oral recitation style, the precursor to *genbunitchi*. *Kusamakura* is also reminiscent of traditional travel records, which focus on the beauty of nature. *Kusamakura* itself is like a haiku with the spring scenes, full of the blossoms functioning as the season words, and with the observation of the human condition from an artist’s standpoint (such as to be found in J.E.Millet’s paintint, *Ophelia’s Death*).<sup>415</sup>

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<sup>412</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.168

<sup>413</sup> Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.168, 169

<sup>414</sup> Nishimura Yoshiko, *Sanposuru Sōseki—shi to sosetsu no aida*, p. 34

<sup>415</sup> Nishimura Yoshiko, *Sanposuru Sōseki—shi to shōsetsu no aida*, p.41

Wada Toshio argued, on the one hand, that the world of *Kusamakura* is exactly like the world of Buson, and many of Sōseki's haiku echo Buson's haiku. The protagonist in *Kusamakura* is an artist who pursues Tao Yuanmei's world of poetry, Wang Wei's world of painting, worlds which constitute Buson's world of art and haiku.<sup>416</sup>

On the other hand, the plot of *Kusamakura* as Kim Tae-yeon<sup>417</sup> argued, consists of the artist's journey towards the completion of a portrait based on 'hininjō', which however he finds cannot be completed without being able to paint in eyes of compassion, only to be found in engagement with the real, mundane world. Through the artist in *Kusamakura* Sōseki depicted the battle he was having in the Meiji world, not as a social reformer, but as an individual with an inner life. In the end *hininjō* alone is insufficient as a way for dealing with the modern world, as Sōseki wrote to Suzuki Miekichi, in 1907: We have to be involved in the world we are living in, even though it is unpleasant or sordid. To live like a poet in a beautiful and pure world can be only a small part of life, not the whole.<sup>418</sup>

The following are some examples of links between Buson's haiku and *Kusamakura*.

The protagonist in *Kusamakura* was seduced by a woman in a Nagoi hot spring. Buson had an experience of being cheated by a raccoon dog at the Kensei temple.

In *Kusamakura*

正一位女に化けておぼろ月<sup>419</sup>

A highranking monk seduced by a woman, misty moonlight.

And Buson's haiku

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<sup>416</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.183

<sup>417</sup> Kim Tae-yeon, in ed. Kwon Hyuck-keon, *Natsume Sōseki Munhwa Yeonko*, p.138

<sup>418</sup> Quoted in Kim Tae-yeon, 'Theory about Kusamakura—The idea from the picture to be completed' in ed. Kwon Hyuck-keon, *Natsume Sōseki Munhwa Yeonko*, p.150

<sup>419</sup> *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol.13 p. 363



公達に狐化けたり宵の春<sup>420</sup>

A man in high position seduced by a raccoon dog, an evening dusk in spring.

Further examples of Buson's haiku identified by Wada Toshio<sup>421</sup> as echoed *Kusamakura*;

おぼろ夜や人たたずめるなしの園。

A hazy moonlit night people stand still, a garden of pear trees

薬盗む女やは有おぼろ月。

A woman is stealing the drug, indeed, hazy moonlight.

春の夜や狐の誘ふ上童。

A spring night, a raccoon dog is seducing a novice monk.

梨の花月に書をよむ女あり。

The pear flowers, under the moon light, a woman reading.

昼舟に狂女のせたり春の水。

A crazy woman on a boat, middle of the day, the spring river.

Wada argued that the world of *hininjō* (detachment) in *Kusamakura* can be interpreted as a revival of Buson's theory of 'leaving the mundane daily-life' (*rizokuron*). However, Sakamoto noted that *hininjō* in general has two different meanings. One is to transcend human emotions so as not to suffer from human affairs. The other is to be cold towards other people and lack sympathy or compassion. Sōseki used the first notion only and

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<sup>420</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p. 183

<sup>421</sup> Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p. 184

defined the second notion as *funinjō*. Wada Toshio gave examples of haiku on these themes by Buson and Sōseki<sup>422</sup>:

肩に来て人懐かしや赤とんぼ。Sōseki

Sitting on a shoulder, long for someone, the red dragonfly.

とんぼうや村懐かしき壁の色。Buson

The dragonfly, missing the village, the color of the wall.

秋の江に打ちこむ 柿の響かな。Sōseki

The autumn river, the sound of falling persimmons into the river.

朝霧や柿打音丁ちょうたり。Buson

The morning fog, the falling sounds of the persimmons, one after another.<sup>423</sup>

### 3-6. Conclusion

In 1896, Shiki wrote a poem about Sōseki in ‘Ron Haiku’.

Sōseki, you are a great reader.

You can live alone in place like Matsuyama

Since you have pure and genuine character.

There are many literary men in the world,

You are the most diligent one in writing haiku.<sup>424</sup>

At one level Sōseki seemed not to follow Shiki’s rules for haiku writing, preferring to write haiku about his own inner life: he used the haiku form as if sending personal notes, or delivering direct comments to a friend.

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<sup>422</sup> All four haiku are quoted in Wada Toshio, *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p. 184

<sup>423</sup> Wada Toshio *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*, p.184

<sup>424</sup> Quoted in Wada Toshio, *Shiki to Sōseki*, p.269

However, Sōseki's direct, colloquial language and use of dialect to express intimacy make them good example of modern haiku. Sōseki also wrote some good sketch haiku with vivid imagery but it was the combination of humour, satire, together with compassion and depth of feeling which made his haiku memorable. Perhaps the most important of Shiki's concepts in Sōseki's writings, whether haiku, kanshi or prose, was the concept of *yama*, the idea that every artistic piece, however brief (even haiku) must have a striking (and perhaps even unexpected) climax. Shiki respected and encouraged Sōseki's haiku writing, impressed by their originality, their humour, their imaginativeness, and the depth of their emotion, as well as by Sōseki's ability to depict the inner life. Sōseki's haiku were indeed modern.

## Chapter Four: Conclusion

As we have seen in this thesis, Shiki had influence on Sōseki's path towards becoming a modern writer. One may have an influence on someone through one's character and values in life or through theory or in the actual intertextuality, according to Ulla Musarra-Schroeder's analysis.

Sōseki began his writing career, it can be argued, with his critique of Shiki's *Nanakusashū* and their subsequent exchange of *kanshi*, when he began using his pen name Sōseki for the first time. Further, Shiki's commitment to literature as a high calling gave Sōseki some of the necessary courage to move in that direction, away from the more pragmatic choice of careers firstly in architecture and later in university teaching. So it was Shiki's vitality, enthusiasm and belief in the value of the enterprise of literature that gave Sōseki the necessary courage to embark on his remarkable career.

While Sōseki neither conformed to Shiki's Confucian, samurai traditional values nor advocated haiku reform, nor yet became a proponent of *shaseibun* theory, it was his sense of duty and loyalty to Shiki, expressed through the *shaseibun* style of his first novel, *I am a Cat*, which in fact launched Sōseki into the world of the novelist.

Shiki's passionate fight for the reform of the traditional poetic forms of haiku and *kanshi* established Sōseki in his own love of these forms, particularly the *kanshi* form, and in his efforts to create something new out of these forms. Furthermore, Shiki's appreciation of Sōseki's *kanshi* was encouragement in itself. Indeed, Shiki's contribution to many of

the budding writers around him, including Sōseki, was his talent for encouraging, guiding and appreciating talent. As Aosu Norio indicated, 'Shiki was more of a critic than a writer. He had an immense appreciative power, and was a value-setter for his time.'<sup>434</sup>

The important contribution Shiki made to Sōseki, to Japanese literature in general and poetry in particular, was what Karatani Kojin called the 'discovery of landscape':<sup>435</sup> the use of language as a 'transparent medium' 'to express something,' rather than *bibun* which he defines as a 'consciousness that does not address the object but rather the language itself'. Shiki insisted again and again that his followers should really 'look' at what they want to describe, just as Western sketching requires the sketcher to refer repeatedly back to the object. The sketch method (*shaseibun*) is a real breakthrough from the traditional relief method in oriental painting. According to Chung Min, the notion, '拱雲托月法' (roast the clouds to hold up the moon) is one of the traditional techniques in oriental painting. The artist paint clouds in ink as a background, leaving light objects like the moon or stars in light relief. In poetry, '声東擊西' (make a noise in the east to attack the west) means to explain the essence better by leaving it unexplained. The beauty of nature as a concept was more important than the actual scene, and so emphasis was given to set phrases which gave the perception of an ideal beauty.<sup>436</sup>

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<sup>434</sup> Aosu Norio (ed.), *Shiki no Genzai, Vol 13 Shiki Senshū*, p.313

<sup>435</sup> Karatani Kojin, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*,

<sup>436</sup> Chung-min, *Hanshi mihak Sanchaek*, p.30

Sōseki and Shiki's friendship was noted by the literary world at that time and later, because of the language with which they addressed each other, namely as husband and wife. It is interesting that the extrovert, idealistic reformer, Shiki called himself wife to Sōseki, the husband, the introverted, pessimistic, realist, thinker. Shiki, who was amazed at Sōseki's talents in English and *kanbun* saw Sōseki as the husband, while Sōseki appreciated Shiki's positive, enthusiastic character. There is no evidence in the case of Sōseki and Shiki's friendship that the terms "husband and wife" were anything but metaphorically meant. This relationship has been defined by scholars as a hermetic relationship. When one is tightly sealed to another, this intimacy can bring reformation and change that can be more significant and thoroughgoing than can be effected alone, without interaction with another. Both wrote to each other about the pleasure of meeting, about personal thoughts and feelings, about the futility of life and about the pain and suffering of the individual. The alchemic force of their close relationship contributed significantly to the modernization of *kanshi* and haiku in Japanese literature.

As an alienated individual, who hated the human world, Sōseki needed a friend like Shiki who accepted him as he is. Sōseki communicated with Shiki to try to deal with his sense of futility and anger towards the world. The feeling of trust and fondness towards Shiki made it possible for Sōseki to reveal his innermost personal state. The nakedness of self expression in some of Sōseki's *kanshi* can even be viewed as responses to his psychiatrist or analyst. Shiki's role, in this friendship, can be characterised as that of analyst or counsellor, helping Sōseki to maintain emotional health.

Sōseki's *kanshi* constituted a breakthrough from traditional *kanshi* and contain many modern elements. His style was modern in the sense that he depicted actual scenes

while he was travelling. It was modern in that he brought vivid colour, sound, fragrance and emotions, referring to actual scenes and experiences, not merely the transcendental concepts of nature and landscapes, which constituted the traditional content of *kanshi*. It was modern in that he wrote about a single individual's feelings.

Both Shiki and Sōseki used *kanshi* as a means of self-expression and exchange their personal feelings and thoughts. Sōseki went further and used *kanshi* to express the futile, alienated modern man's psychology. Karatani Kojin asserted that as long as a work is seen as the 'expression of self' of an 'author,' that work is already located within the apparatus of modern literature, no matter how anti-modern and anti-Western it may be.<sup>437</sup>

Shiki's emphasis on close observation and sketch method (*shaseibun*) in haiku has elements of Basho's idea of portraying through direct observation. However, Shiki praised Buson's works because of their vivid and picturesque expression; nevertheless they did not necessarily portray reality. Shiki explained in his essay, 'The Haiku writer Buson',<sup>438</sup> that Buson illustrated idealistic beauty and the beauty of humanity, not objective beauty. This depiction of ideal beauty and Shiki's claim to sketch the real world as it is may seem contradictory, but Shiki argued in his *Haikai Taiyō*<sup>439</sup> that haiku writers should use both imagination and reality. Thus, modernisation of haiku for Shiki meant realism, not in the sense of depicting reality but also in the sense of creating

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<sup>437</sup> Karatani Kōjin, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*. P. 192

<sup>438</sup> 'Haijin Buson' in *Haikai Taiyō*, p. 114-126

<sup>439</sup> 'Haikai Taiyō' *Masaoka Shikishū* p.266

reality and that the reality can be a natural phenomenon, a state of mind, or a human affair.

Most of Shiki's writing was autobiographical. Especially in later life, when he could no longer move around because of his illness, Shiki existed only through his writings. Shiki portrayed the complexities of self-expression in the modern world using haiku and *kanshi*, through realism and objective sketches from real life, especially by writing about his own personal, individual matters. As Janine Beichman wrote, "Shiki made them (haiku, and *tanka*) express individuality. It was not this seemingly objective description which made his writing modern, but rather his depiction of his own character, of himself."<sup>440</sup>

While Shiki emphasized self-expression through objective depiction, Sōseki concentrated on directly expressing his subjective, inner emotions. Humour and satire were some of the techniques Sōseki used:

For example, Shiki wrote

永き日や驢馬を追い行く鞭の影。<sup>441</sup> 1895

Long spring day, the shadow of a whip that drives a horse.

Sōseki wrote

永き日や欠伸うつして別れ行く。<sup>442</sup> 1896

Long spring day, departing away as if passing on a yawn.

Both Shiki and Sōseki used seasonal words, 'long spring day'. Shiki portrayed the long shadow of the whip, sensitizing the reader to the late light of a long day in spring. This haiku can be easily drawn as a picture since it was written in *shasei* method. Sōseki,

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<sup>440</sup> Janine Beichman, *Masaoka Shiki*,

<sup>441</sup> Masaoka Shiki, 'Kansan Rakuki', *Masaoka Shikishū*, p.43

<sup>442</sup> *Sōseki Zenshu*, vol. 17, p.147



however, focused on the boredom of a too long spring day. As a farewell poem, Sōseki's haiku is humorous rather than *shasei*. This haiku is an example of Sōseki's unexpected and uniquely humorous haiku, which Shiki so admired.

Sōseki came to a dramatic understanding of the huge gulf between his own culture and English culture during his stay in England. In a letter to his wife Kyoko he wrote, 'On a foggy day it is darker than a moon-lit night, and not pleasant at all. I would like to go back to Japan soon and to see the clear sky.' In April 1904 in that foggy street, Sōseki also wrote an English poem about the two worlds, east and west:

We live in different worlds, you and I.  
Try what means you will  
We cannot meet, you and I.  
You live in your world and are happy;  
I in mine and am contented.  
Then let us understand better  
Not to interfere with each other's lot.  
We break an ox's horn by bending it:  
We are not meant to be broken like that!  
Your world is far away from me.  
It is veiled with miles of mist and haze.  
It is in vain that I should strain my eyes  
To catch glimpses of your abode.  
Flowers may there be; and lots of things pretty,  
Yet never in a dream I wished to be there.

For I am here and not there;

And I am forever mine and not yours!<sup>443</sup>

Here Sōseki takes a somewhat defiantly individualistic attitude, a refusal to be intimidated into accepting something alien to his inner self.

Shiki's modernizing achievements have been extensively re-evaluated after World War

2. Oe Kenzaburō<sup>444</sup> for example, pointed out just how "modern" Shiki was: Shiki's motivation for his reformist zeal came from within, from an inner, creative understanding of the issues, rather than simply from the kind of fawning, superficial aping of the west which Oe sees as occurring since World War 2.<sup>445</sup>

On the other hand, Sōseki's achievement was the honest, detailed and thoughtful expression of ambivalence. According to Karatani,

Sōseki, while refusing to recognize the universality of the west, never attempted to idealize the universality of Asia. In this sense Sōseki's attitude may be described as 'scientific'. Sōseki did not advocate anything positive. Rather, he continued to think from the unstable position of one who finds himself 'between' East and West, seeking refuge in neither pole of opposition.<sup>446</sup>

In all his writings, including his *kanshi* and haiku, Sōseki's conscience was humanistic and individual. He tried to create his own individual identity by the on-going processes of reflection and challenge of the dominant discourses both in the literary and in the political worlds.

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<sup>443</sup> Etō Jun, *Sōseki to Sono Jidai*, vol. 2. p.323-324

<sup>444</sup> Oe Kenzaburō, 'Shiki wa warera no dōjidaijin', Awazu Norio (ed.), *Shiki no Genzai*, p. 35-50

<sup>445</sup> Imanishi Kan'ichi, 'Shiki to Gendai' *Kokubungaku*, October, 1986.

<sup>446</sup> Karatani Kojin, 'The Discovery of Landscape', *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*. P.44

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